

Mark  
Zebrowski

# DECCANI PAINTING



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A surprisingly large proportion of the masterpieces of Indian art was produced for the mysterious sultans of the Deccan, in the plateau region of southern India, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Little research has been done either on the Deccani kingdoms themselves or on the arts they produced. At least three kingdoms, Bijapur, Golconda and Ahmadnagar, patronized outstanding painting, but because of strong cultural links with the Middle East, especially Safavid Iran, Deccani painting has long been confused with Persian, Turkish or Mughal court art. The art of the Deccan, however, achieved its own unique character, owing as much to the lush sensuality of South Indian art as to Persianate traditions. Dense compositions and intense colours create a lyrical romanticism, alien to both the sobriety of Mughal art and the calligraphic subtleties of Iran.

Although, since the 1930s, several scholars have published individual Deccani paintings, this book is the first attempt to bring together all the major paintings and to assign them to schools and artists. It reconstructs the great period of art from the late sixteenth century until the 1680s when the Mughals conquered the Deccan. It also includes eighteenth and nineteenth-century paintings at Hyderabad under the Asafiya dynasty and, finally, painting at the provincial courts of the Hindu rajas and Muslim nawabs, tributaries of Hyderabad.

### THE AUTHOR

Mark Zebrowski, an expert in the field of Indian art, received his training at the Musée Guimet, Paris, and Harvard University.

Jacket illustration  
*Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II hawking*  
Bijapur, c. 1590  
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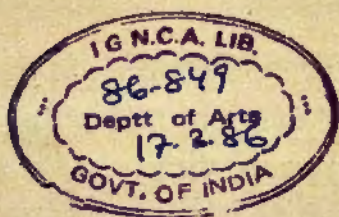


Jyoti Bhatt National  
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*For my parents*

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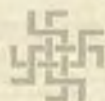


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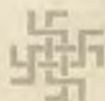
# Acknowledgements

The idea of doing a study on some aspect of Indian painting first occurred to me in 1968 when I was serving in the American Peace Corps near Hyderabad, Deccan. I had already been in India for a year. Living in a foreign, but not alien, land had produced an uneasy lethargy. I wanted to break through the façade of twentieth-century life and discover the 'real' India. I had no idea, however, how to do this; a catalyst was needed.

That catalyst proved to be a chance encounter with a connoisseur of Indian art, the late Muhammad Ashraf, of the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad. In his darkened office in the museum, former palace of Hyderabad's distinguished prime minister, Nawab Sir Salar Jang, time seemed to have stood still. *Khus khus* blinds, dripping with water, barricaded his little room from the heat and noise outside. One of the nawab's clocks ticked softly in a corner. Mr Ashraf, his fingers sparkling in the semi-darkness with large silver rings, enthusiastically described the Deccani kingdoms which had flourished at the same time as the more famous Mughal empire. He also pointed out the paintings and objects which I should study in his museum. Another world suddenly opened up, which seemed just as real as the noisy world of traffic rushing by the museum gate. I felt bound to explore it and to share my findings. This book is the result.

A year later, at the Musée Guimet, Paris, where Jeanine Auboyer and Andrée Busson were crucially helpful, I was able to examine a collection which is particularly rich in early Deccani painting. At Harvard University, where I completed the doctoral thesis which forms the basis of this book, Stuart Cary Welch showed me how to look at paintings. Professors John Rosenfield and Oleg Grabar broadened my contact with Indian and Islamic art, while Dr Annemarie Schimmel gave me a glimpse of the flower garden of Islamic mystical thought. Robert Skelton of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, selflessly supplied facts in the field of Indian painting. Edwin Binney 3rd, John Robert Alderman, Mr and Mrs W. G. Archer and Howard Hodgkin nurtured my enthusiasm for this project over the years, providing both advice and assistance on countless occasions.

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# Introduction

**A** SURPRISINGLY LARGE PROPORTION of the surviving masterpieces of Indian painting was produced for the mysterious sultans who ruled the Deccan, the vast plateau south of the Vindhya mountains, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Although little is known about the history or civilization of the region, it has now become clear that at least three kingdoms – Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda – produced painting of astonishing quality.

Strong cultural links with the Middle East, especially Iran, have long led scholars to confuse Deccani art with Iranian styles. Before the 1930s, the existence of major schools of miniature painting in the Deccan was hardly suspected. True, a few important works had already been reproduced, but they were usually described as Persian, Indo-Persian or Mughal. The most striking member of this small published group was the portrait of the sultan of Ahmadnagar, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (4, 6–9 and col. pl. 11). As an awesome symbol of royal power, it has few equals in either eastern or western art. In 1926, Edgard Blochet enigmatically presented it to the world as *un prince musulman des Indes, vers 1560*.<sup>1</sup>

Hardly less dramatic is the jubilant procession of Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah of Golconda (1626–72), riding an elephant, accompanied by courtiers and musicians, in the State Public Library, Leningrad (152–54). As such pictorial records of courtly events, so common in Mughal art, were not favoured subjects for Deccani painters, we can hardly identify anyone in the excited crowd other than the sultan himself. When the Swedish connoisseur F. R. Martin published this painting in 1912, he called it ‘a royal procession, school of Aurangzeb’.<sup>2</sup>

Related paintings very gradually came to light. In 1923, Kühnel revealed the portrait of a prince dozing under a tree, fanned and massaged by pages, in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR) (85 and col. pl. XIII).<sup>3</sup> Dubbed the *Siesta*, it epitomizes the ‘escapist’ mood of the Deccani courts, where the sultans took more interest in leisure and the arts than in government or conquest: as proof, one may point out that no painting of quality survives which celebrates the military achievements of the sultans, frequent themes for Mughal artists. The precise regnal histories which the Mughal emperors so avidly commissioned are also noticeably rare from the Deccan.

A major breakthrough occurred in 1927, when N. C. Mehta published the magnificent study of a bull elephant, covered in rubies and gold, from the collection of Babu Sitaram Sahu, Benares (73).<sup>4</sup> His interpretation of the Persian inscription on the mount, *amal-i dakaniyan* (‘work of the Deccanis’), to mean that, ‘it was painted by a Deccani painter . . . the



finest example of that . . . [school of] painting, yet known', produced a growing awareness of Deccani art as a distinct phenomenon. Unfortunately, the present location of this painting, which recent evidence suggests is a portrait of Atash Khan, the favourite elephant of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur (1579–1627), is not known.

Discoveries multiplied during the following three decades. Goetz justifiably stressed the importance of the early Bijapuri school<sup>5</sup> and, in his book *The art and architecture of Bikaner State* (1950), published the grandiose processional portrait of Ibrahim Adil Shah (50),<sup>6</sup> and two pages from the northern Deccani *ragamala* (29–30),<sup>7</sup> then chiefly in the Royal Bikaner Collection. Kramrisch presented an account of Deccani art from the ancient period to nineteenth-century Hyderabad miniatures in her *Survey of painting in the Deccan* (1937). In the following year, Gray reproduced portraits of Ibrahim Adil Shah II holding castanets (59 and col. pl. VIII), and a formidable courtier (55),<sup>8</sup> both by the artist who is here called the Bodleian painter, after his masterpiece in the Bodleian Library which has recently come to light (54 and col. pl. VII). In the catalogue of the 1947 exhibition of Indian art in London, Gray also published a Bijapuri mullah in meditation by the same hand (57),<sup>9</sup> and other important works, including *Hindola Raga* (26 and col. pl. v).<sup>10</sup>

With this comparative abundance of new material, Barrett produced a short monograph, *Painting of the Deccan* (1958), in which he put forward his thesis about the lack of practicality in the lives and interests of the Deccani rulers, contrasted with the worldly concerns of the Mughal emperors, as reflected in the arts of both civilizations. In the same year, Skelton reviewed the known body of Bijapuri painting and published a new masterpiece, the *Fighting cranes* (61),<sup>11</sup> probably by the Bodleian painter.

During the 1960s and 1970s a handful of superb Deccani paintings came to light, including the portrait of Sultan Ali Adil Shah II and courtiers of c. 1660 (107),<sup>12</sup> which demolished the oft-repeated theory that Deccani art disintegrated after 1627, the year of Ibrahim Adil Shah's death; the almost life-size portrait bust of the adolescent Ibrahim (49 and col. pl. VI);<sup>13</sup> the equestrian portrait of Ibrahim in Leningrad, perhaps the most lyrical of all Indian paintings (69 and col. pl. IX);<sup>14</sup> the Bijapuri *Deer hunt* (115),<sup>15</sup> also produced for Ali Adil Shah II, c. 1660; the naïvely exquisite *Gauri Ragini* (25 and col. pl. IV),<sup>16</sup> another extraordinary page from the northern Deccani *ragamala*; and two Maratha portraits, one of General Sadashiv Rao (234 and col. pl. XXIII),<sup>17</sup> the other of the boy king of Satara (237),<sup>18</sup> both from a later phase of Deccani art.

The reader may now feel justified in asking two questions which will prove embarrassing to the writer. First, what exactly are the characteristics of the Deccani schools, which so many researchers have tried to reconstruct during the past five decades? Secondly, who were these mysterious sultans who boldly pitched their tents in the centre of peninsular India, only to disappear abruptly after two centuries, leaving little trace except for a few ruined cities and two hundred great paintings, now scattered among collections in Asia, Europe and America? These questions are still difficult to answer precisely because the Deccani sultans lacked the customary Islamic passion for historical record. As they commissioned fewer histories than their Mughal contemporaries, much less is known about the Deccan than about northern India. Moreover, Deccani paintings are rarely dated or inscribed with the names of artists or patrons, as Mughal and Rajasthani pictures often are.

We can, however, piece together a history of Deccani painting, using the few inscribed and dated paintings as beacons to light our way. But before doing so, an understanding of the



basic change which had occurred in India during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries is necessary: Muslim rulers, mainly Turkish speakers, from Iran, Central Asia and Afghanistan conquered most of northern India, establishing governmental institutions and artistic traditions which were closely linked to the civilization of the eastern Islamic world. Ruling from Delhi, they infiltrated southwards in the early fourteenth century and subdued the Deccan, which until then had been ruled by Hindu kings. Islamic rule was to prevail there for the next six centuries, until 1950, when the last nizām of Hyderabad relinquished power.

In 1347, a Muslim officer serving in the Deccan rebelled against the sultan of Delhi, assumed the title Bahman Shah, after the legendary hero of the *Shah nama*, and founded the independent Bahmanid dynasty. The capital of this huge empire which stretched south of the Vindhya mountains from the Arabian Sea to the Bay of Bengal was first Gulbarga (1347–1422) and later Bidar (1422–1512). Although superb architectural remains at both sites attest to the wealth and culture of the Bahmanid sultans, no painting in an original style can as yet be attributed to their patronage.

It was not until their provincial governors rebelled against central authority at the end of the fifteenth century and established the five Deccani sultanates – Bidar, Berar, Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda – that great developments in the art of painting occurred. Three of these kingdoms – Ahmadnagar, Bijapur and Golconda – quickly assumed political and cultural importance.

Ahmad I Nizām Shah, sultan of Ahmadnagar, was the son of a Hindu slave converted to Islam. Yusuf Adil Shah, sultan of Bijapur, was a descendant of the Ottoman dynasty of Istanbul who had sought refuge in the Deccan. Similarly, Sultan Qulī Qutb Shah of Golconda was a Black Sheep (Qara Qoyunlu) Turkman prince who had fled to India with his family and retainers, when the White Sheep (Aq Qoyunlu) Turkmans conquered their kingdom in western Iran in 1467. All three sultanates adhered to the Shia sect of Islam and became close allies of the Safavids of Iran (1501–1722) against the Sunni Mughal empire of northern India.

As the Deccan preserved its political independence from northern India until the present century, except for a brief period of about four decades (1687–1724), following conquest by the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, a distinct Islamic culture developed there. The Deccan's population was extremely mixed, composed not only of Indian Muslims and Hindus, but also large and powerful communities of Turks, Persians, Arabs and Africans. Sufis, writers, merchants and military men from all over the Middle East came to preach, write or conquer, lured by generous royal patronage. In addition to the close Safavid bond, there was also the influence of the Arab world, especially Egypt, Iraq and the Yemen, because of long-standing commercial links between those countries and southern India across the Arabian Sea: this was an influence notably absent in northern India which had closer ties with eastern Iran and Central Asia. The Deccan became, within India, the greatest centre of Arabic learning and literary composition, a position it held until the Mughal conquest of 1687.<sup>19</sup>

These intimate contacts with western Asia were culturally enriching both for India and for the Middle East: the style of Persian poetry which developed at the Indian courts spread westwards until it became the standard of excellence all over the Islamic world. However, the political effects were the source of the Deccan's perennial instability. Turks, Arabs and Persians formed a clique of 'foreigners', often Shia Muslims, bitterly opposed to the 'natives', who included Hindus, Indian Muslims, Africans and Afghans, the latter invariably Sunni.



Internal politics consisted of turbulent alternations in power by the various ethnic groups. In general, Persians were most favoured: as their language had become that of the administration and court etiquette, they dominated the cultural and political fibre of the land.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries a great flowering of miniature painting suddenly occurred in three regions of the subcontinent: in northern India, for the emperor and nobility of the Mughal empire; in Rajasthan under the patronage of Hindu rajas; and for the sultans of the Deccan. Compared to Mughal and Rajasthani art, Deccani painting still remains relatively uncharted. The reasons are manifold. Most importantly, surviving Deccani paintings are rarely signed or dated. Invasions and long periods of political upheaval dispersed or totally destroyed local collections, making Deccani art the rarest of the Indian schools today. One can identify approximately two hundred important paintings, all published in this book. Although this number is undoubtedly a fragment of the original production, it contains such a large number of masterpieces as to arouse intense speculation concerning the brilliant achievements of the school as a whole.

Few Deccani paintings record historical events or realistically portray their subjects, as Mughal art does. Nor was there much interest in the thrills of the hunt, court ceremonial or Hindu ritual, favourite Rajasthani themes. Instead, princely portraits predominate which aim to establish a gently lyrical atmosphere, often one of quiet abandon to the joys of love, music, poetry or just the perfume of a flower. Although figures are conventional types, moods are brilliantly established through fantastic colours and unconventional poses. We are admitted into a private world of feeling, inhabited by pages, princes, dervishes and mullahs; rarely do we see an army on the march. Reflection and reverie triumph over dramatic action.

Bred in an exotic, multiracial society, Deccani art has the impossible, fantastic mood of a mirage. The delicate rhythms of Persia, the lush sensuality of southern India, the restraint of European and Ottoman Turkish portraiture all contributed to its uniqueness. Like many other hybrids, it bloomed vigorously but briefly, chiefly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, dying suddenly in the nineteenth.

Deccani art seems to spring mysteriously from the unknown, for so little of it has survived. The items which have emerged – paintings, bidriware, textiles and other kinds of objects – differ radically in spirit from the cool precision of Mughal art or the earthy directness of Rajasthan. Although they speak of a flourishing civilization with a distinctive aesthetic, hence a distinctive body of cultural values, these objects are still so few that it is hard to understand the values they communicate, or even their language of expression. Moreover, we cannot yet identify their formative, pre-classical stages.

Deccani artifacts, chance survivors of an extinct culture, nevertheless transmit to us the ideas, habits and tastes of their makers and possessors. We sense the ideal physical type of the medieval Deccan, which these pieces mirror, and the fierceness of Central Asian warriors mellowing under contact with Indian civilization, for the patrons of the arts were either foreigners, or descendants of foreigners, while the artists were nearly always Indian. The process of the conquered conquering their conquerors is exemplified by Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur, descendant of the Ottoman sultans, seeking nourishment from Hindu culture.<sup>20</sup>

In most Deccani art fantastic colours and exuberant distortions of form create a restless opulence and a romantic nostalgia for another time and place. Paintings – as well as the palaces and tombs of Gulbarga, Bidar and Bijapur – make the spirit soar, like visions from the *Arabian nights*, for in fact they are South Indian visions of Iran, constructed by native crafts-



men to satisfy the yearnings of Middle Eastern conquerors for a lost world. Deccani art is therefore not exactly South Indian, although produced there, nor is it Iranian, although that is the country of inspiration. Instead it is a pungent amalgam of both worlds, an impossible dream, which fills us with the same reveries that moved the indolent sultans of the Deccan.

The earliest, most original and briefest flowering of painting occurred at Ahmadnagar, capital of the Nizam Shahi sultans. A history of the reign of Sultan Husain, the *Tarif-i husain shahi* was written in 1565 and illustrated with twelve miniatures (1-2 and col. pl. 1).<sup>21</sup> Although related to early Malwa painting, especially the *Nimat nama*, commissioned by Nasir ud din Shah, sultan of Mandu (1500-10),<sup>22</sup> the bold compositions and startling colours transcend their sources.

Impressive though they are, they do not prepare us for the extraordinary image of an enthroned sultan in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (4, 6-9 and col. pl. II), executed just a decade or so later, probably a portrait of Murtaza Nizam Shah (1565-88).<sup>23</sup> Influenced by contemporary Safavid painting, but in no way imitative, it has an austere, mystical quality that is more typical of great religious painting than royal portraiture. One wonders why no trace of its pre-classical stages has emerged and if this artist was an isolated genius. Since we do not know his name, he is here called the Paris painter.

Two other works by him have recently been discovered: the portrait of the same sultan relaxing in bed, his throne-room dress unbuttoned at the neck (5) and the charming, though less moving, portrait of a young prince on horseback (10).<sup>24</sup> In all three pages, the elongated figures, gentle rhythms, gold background and mood of noble restraint remind us more of fourteenth-century Italian painting, especially the work of Simone Martini, than anything else in Indian or Iranian art.

The *Running elephant* (16)<sup>25</sup> and five other drawings which have only recently come to light (15, 17-20) can also be attributed to Ahmadnagar, though slightly later, probably the last decade of the sixteenth century, just before the Mughal conquest of the capital in 1600.

Almost as rare is the marvellous group of late sixteenth-century *ragamala* pages which have previously been attributed to either the Bijapur or the Ahmadnagar court (24-31 and col. pls III-V). Their earthy spirit, Sanskrit inscriptions and similarity to the *Tarif* and *Nimat nama* styles suggest, instead, that they were painted on the northern borders of the Deccan for a Hindu patron, who may have been a distant vassal of the sultan of Ahmadnagar. They have little in common with the styles practised at the Islamic courts of the Deccan.

At Bijapur, painting flourished for a much longer time, for more than a century (c. 1560-1680), and we can reconstruct a much fuller account of it, thanks to a relatively large body of surviving works, more extensive than from any other Deccani centre except eighteenth-century Hyderabad. Just as at Ahmadnagar, where the simple *Tarif* style suddenly erupts into the astonishing achievements of the Paris painter, so at Bijapur the provincialism of the *Nujum al ulum*, an astrological manuscript dated 1570 (43-44),<sup>26</sup> hardly prepares us for the paintings executed for Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1579-1627), perhaps the Deccan's most brilliant patron. They rival the finest Safavid and Mughal work in expressive power and technical refinement.

The cause of this remarkable development was the sultan's extraordinary character. Not only was he a mystic, gripped with a passion for both Hindu and Muslim thought, a great musician and a poet, but he had an insatiable, almost neurotic thirst for great works of art and for the company of the most creative men of the period. His poet laureate, Zuhuri, has



recorded Ibrahim's efforts to attract the finest artists, writers and philosophers from all over the Muslim world and his discussions with them in the royal library.<sup>27</sup>

It is possible to isolate the work of four great Bijapuri masters, whose names are still unknown because no reliably inscribed paintings by them have yet come to light. These four masters are here called the Bikaner painter, the Bodleian painter, the Leningrad painter and the Dublin painter, after the present location of their finest work. There are several lesser painters who may yet emerge as equally important but whose present work, limited to one or two paintings, is so incomplete that we cannot now fully assess their capabilities.

Sensual delight in the mass and movement of the human body characterize the Bikaner painter, author of the *Procession of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II* in the Bikaner Palace Collection (50), and the portrait bust of Ibrahim as an adolescent (49 and col. pl. vi). The Bodleian painter, on the other hand, was more interested in capturing inner realities. His figures radiate an intense meditative calm, as in the *Dervish receiving a visitor* in the Bodleian Library (54 and col. pl. vii),<sup>28</sup> the *Mullah* (57), lost in contemplation of religious truths, the *Stout courtier* (55), the *Kneeling dervish* (60) in the Gulshan album, Teheran,<sup>29</sup> and *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II holding castanets* (59 and col. pl. viii).

Vastly different is the work of the Leningrad painter, who, by using paradise garden settings of Persian origin and the luminous meadows of northern Renaissance tradition, achieves a sombre poetry particularly suited to Ibrahim's romantic temperament. The author believes that the Leningrad painter is, in fact, Farrukh Husain, whom Zuhuri describes as the sultan's favourite painter. His best picture is the portrait of Ibrahim hawking, in Leningrad (69 and col. pl. ix). His other known works are the portraits of Ibrahim playing a *tambur* (70 and col. pl. x)<sup>30</sup> and riding an elephant (71-72),<sup>31</sup> the elephant study, formerly in Benares (73), and a running horse and groom (74 and col. pl. xi),<sup>32</sup> which is the mirror image of the Benares page.

The Dublin painter, probably a younger artist strongly influenced by the Leningrad painter, produced drier versions of the same vision, as in the *Madonna and child* (83),<sup>33</sup> *The kiss* (84)<sup>34</sup> and the *Siesta* (85 and col. pl. xiii).<sup>35</sup> His painting of a *Yogini*, however, achieves something of the brooding tension of the Leningrad painter's work (82 and col. pl. xii). Bijapuri painting was so famous at this time throughout India that several Mughal artists, including Farrukh Beg and Muhammad Ali, copied its conventions, without capturing its mood, for that lover of exotica, the Mughal emperor Jahangir.<sup>36</sup>

After Ibrahim's death in 1627, the political and cultural influence of the Mughal empire grew paramount throughout the subcontinent. Bijapuri artists began to imitate the realistic style of formally arranged *darbar* scenes and single-figure portraits, so popular at the Mughal court. Although the lush romanticism of earlier work is now lost, a limited use of glowing colour and vigorous gesturing still remains. Several paintings from this period are signed and two are dated, an innovation which imitates Mughal practice.

The painter Muhammad Khan executed a stiff, though superbly decorative *darbar* scene of Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah (1627-56) presenting a generous annual stipend to the artist. He stands by the royal throne, holding the scroll which gives details of the grant and the date 1651, proving the high status of some painters at the Indo-Muslim courts (95).<sup>37</sup> His colleagues, Haidar Ali and Ibrahim Khan, who painted the signed portrait of the sultan and his African prime minister, Ikhlas Khan, riding a richly caparisoned elephant, used the Mughalizing style with more originality (100).<sup>38</sup>



During the reigns of Ali II (1656–72) and Sikandar (1672–86) the Mughal input was increasingly absorbed, so that line again reverts to strong indigenous rhythms and colour becomes romantically rich and dark. One of the finest artists of the period, who is here called the Bombay painter, was responsible for the portrait of Ali lying on a bed, surrounded by courtiers (107), two jewel-like portrait busts of Ali, nearly life size (108, 111),<sup>39</sup> and the portrait of Ali symbolically slaying a tiger, like an ancient Near Eastern amulet (110).<sup>40</sup>

Another great artist, whose name we do not know, painted the poignant *Deer hunt* (115). Its turbulent mauve clouds on the horizon recall the effects of marbled-paper drawings (102–6), which, although often attributed to Ottoman Turkey, were probably executed at Bijapur during the mid seventeenth century.<sup>41</sup> All these great paintings, most of which have come to light very recently, prove that Bijapuri painting was moving into an exciting new phase, cut short by the Mughal conquest of 1686, rather than declining as has generally been thought.

For Golconda, it is still very difficult to establish broad stylistic trends. Painting in almost pure Safavid, Turkish and Mughal styles continued throughout the history of the sultanate (1512–1687), suggesting that the Qutb Shahi sultans not only welcomed artists from all over the Muslim world, but encouraged them to retain their original styles. Nevertheless, a taste for fiery colours – especially lilac-pink, coral-red and inky blue – and a seething vitality of line and composition characterize the work of both native and foreign artists. The ruling dynasty was descended from the dispossessed Black Sheep Turkman sultans of western Iran, who emigrated to India in the late fifteenth century, and the earthy Turkman style of their original homeland certainly set the tone for later developments in Golconda taste.

The earliest Golconda paintings in an original style are the eight illustrations to the Urdu *Kulliyat* (*Collected works*) of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah of Golconda (1580–1612), painted in the late sixteenth century (121–33).<sup>42</sup> The opulent excess of these pages resembles the work of an eccentric Bukhara artist named Muhammad Murad Samarqandi, who may have received training from the same artists as the Golconda painter. Dating from a few decades later are the equally energetic *Composite horse* (135 and col. pl. xviii)<sup>43</sup> and the *Tree on the island of waqwaq* (137 and col. pl. xix),<sup>44</sup> both in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR).

Few outstanding Golconda paintings survive, but the almost frenetic *Procession of Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah riding an elephant* (152), in Leningrad, retains the splendid vitality of earlier work and proves that the Golconda school, despite Mughal influence, was reaching new creative heights by the mid seventeenth century. The portrait of an African eunuch, visible at a younger age in the Leningrad procession fanning the sultan, may be by the same artist (155 and col. pl. xx).<sup>45</sup>

Deccani tradition maintains that Abul Hasan (1672–87), the last sultan of Golconda, was a great artistic patron, but few paintings can be attributed to his reign. Several divergent styles co-existed in his workshop. The portraits of Saint Shah Raju and his son (158–59),<sup>46</sup> signed by Rahim Khan, and the equestrian portrait of Shah Raju (161),<sup>47</sup> signed by Rasul Khan, reflect Bijapuri taste. Rahim Deccani, responsible for the signed painting of a prince in a garden (176),<sup>48</sup> and the anonymous painter of the brilliantly sensual *Sleeping girl* (168)<sup>49</sup> in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR), were strongly influenced by such late Safavid artists as Shaykh Abbasi and his sons, Ali Naqi and Muhammad Taqi. Golconda and Bijapuri artists probably emigrated to Rajasthan, especially to Kota, Mewar, Ajmer and Bikaner, and



perhaps to the Punjab Hills, after the fall of the two kingdoms to Aurangzeb's armies in 1686-87.

The extinction of the Deccani sultanates and the decline of the Mughal empire in the following decades produced a shift in artistic patronage from great princes in cities to lesser notables, who now had free rein to amass power and wealth at their *jagirs*. A new rage for portraiture developed between the fall of Golconda and the emergence of the Hyderabad state (1724), which tended to enhance the prestige of these newly independent princelings. Although earlier researchers have ignored this period, so many extraordinary paintings have recently come to light that it must now be seen as one of the most exciting phases of Asian portraiture, all the more surprising as workshops were usually small and remote, and times were turbulent.

A crisp new idiom arose which combined the sober realism of Mughal portraiture with Deccani extravagance. Often the subject is painted with cool precision, but placed in a fantasy world of flamboyant shapes and colours, providing a kind of escape from officialdom, as in the *Prince galloping across a rocky meadow* (183 and col. pl. XXI); *Atachin Beg Bahadur Qalmaq out hawking* (185); the portrait of *Nawab Salabat Khan* (187); the *Prince smelling a rose* (207); *Ramkali Ragini* (201); *Allah-wirdi Khan receiving a petition* (209 and col. pl. XXII) and the group portrait of the Kurnool court (211).<sup>50</sup>

Despite the emergence of the independent kingdom of Hyderabad in 1724, political and economic instability continued throughout the eighteenth century and until well after the establishment of the British protectorate in 1800. These troubled times transformed Deccani painting. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the princes of the great Muslim states had inspired respect, their likenesses providing the subject matter of art. The great period of portraiture which resulted, however, was a temporary deviation in the long history of Indian art, as almost no portraits have emerged from before the sixteenth century. Traditionally, Indian artists were more accustomed to depicting deities than real people, using the naked human body, especially the female form, as a model for the gods.

With the breakdown of Islamic authority in the eighteenth century, Deccani artists and patrons turned away from portraiture to rediscover the curvaceous female body, escaping into an idealized world of princesses and courtesans. Most male portraiture from then on is dry and repetitive, and even in the rediscovered feminine world, there is often a tendency towards effects of mere prettiness.

Although financial strains prevented most princes from becoming patrons of the arts, some great paintings were produced, especially at provincial centres, where artists sometimes worked with greater originality than at Hyderabad, and at the courts of Maratha rulers, who, after conducting guerilla warfare against the Mughals for decades, were now settling down in the cities of the western Deccan. This small group of late masterpieces includes the *Lovesick lady* (223); the quietly virile portrait of the Maratha conqueror, Sadashiv Rao (234 and col. pl. XXIII); a poignant depiction of the Satara court (237); the portrait of Munir al Mulk, a Hyderabad nobleman, probably painted by Venkatchellam, which retains the intimate grandeur of earlier Deccani portraits (247 and col. pl. XXIV);<sup>51</sup> and the marriage of Lakshmi and Vishnu, possibly from Shorapur (256).<sup>52</sup> Many important Deccani paintings, particularly from the later period, undoubtedly remain to be discovered. A thorough search through provincial Maharashtrian collections, for example, would probably yield further extraordinary Maratha works.



As this book is the first attempt to bring together all the known examples of Deccani painting, much of it will eventually have to be revised; and a substantial amount of new material will one day come to light. The purpose of this study, aside from giving a glimpse of the artistic heights reached by a major culture, today so little known, is to encourage others to rescue the many forgotten chapters of Indian art from oblivion. Much more remains hidden than has been revealed in the arts of India.

## NOTES

1. Blochet (1926), pl. 109.
2. Martin, pl. 208.
3. Kühnel (1923), pl. 104.
4. Mehta, p. 106, pl. 47.
5. Goetz (1935), pp. 278-84.
6. Goetz (1950), pl. viii.
7. *Ibid.*, pls II, IV.
8. Gray (1938), pls B, C.
9. Gray (1950), pl. 145.
10. *Ibid.*, pl. 142.
11. Skelton (1958), fig. 6.
12. Barrett (1960), pl. 8.
13. Soustiel and David (1974), no. 25.
14. Ivanov, Grek and Akimushkin, pl. 81.
15. Zebrowski, in Welch (1973), no. 78.
16. Binney (1973), no. 118.
17. *Marg* June 1978, col. pl. 39.
18. Welch (1978b), no. 70.
19. Khan (1963).
20. See pp. 70-73.
21. Barrett (1958), pl. 1; Barrett and Gray, p. 116; Heras, pls 5-8.
22. Skelton (1959).
23. Blochet (1926), pl. 109; Barrett (1958), pl. 5.
24. Both previously unpublished.
25. Welch (1976), no. 36.
26. Arnold and Wilkinson, pls 3-5; Welch (1973), no. 74; Binney (1973), no. 117.
27. Ibrahim Adil Shah II, introduction, p. 12.
28. Previously unpublished.
29. Beach (1965), p. 87.
30. Hajek, pls 10-14.
31. Previously unpublished.
32. Pinder-Wilson (1976), p. 90.
33. Ettinghausen (1963), p. 16.
34. Cagman and Tamindi, pl. 45.
35. Arnold and Wilkinson, pl. 93; Barrett (1958), pl. 7.
36. See pp. 87, 96.
37. Previously unpublished.
38. Pinder-Wilson (1976), no. 179.
39. Previously unpublished.
40. Christie's, London, 24 April 1980, lot 55.
41. See appendix to ch. 5.
42. Three of the eight miniatures have already been published: Skelton (1973a), figs 153-54; Mittal (1974), pl. x.
43. Previously unpublished.
44. Skelton (1973a), fig. 160.
45. Previously unpublished.
46. Previously unpublished.
47. Saint Akbar Shah, pl. c.
48. Barrett (1958), pl. 10.
49. Previously unpublished.
50. All previously unpublished.
51. Previously unpublished.
52. Previously unpublished.



# I

## Ahmadnagar

AS THE KINGDOM of Ahmadnagar enjoyed independence for a shorter time than either Bijapur or Golconda, its painting is the rarest of the Deccani schools and has been the most elusive to reconstruct. Majestically austere, the few surviving works possess the gentle emotion and brilliant colour of fourteenth-century Italian painting, with which they share a fondness for plain gold backgrounds. There is also the energy of royal Turkman painting of fifteenth-century Iran. In fact, Turkman princes, probably with painters and artisans, emigrated from Tabriz to the Deccan in the late fifteenth century, setting the tone for Deccani art until the Mughal conquest.<sup>1</sup> But despite foreign influences, there is an underlying Indian humanism, an interest in the mass and rhythms of the human body.

A brief flowering of the arts took place during the late sixteenth century. Three sultans were generous patrons; Husain Nizam Shah I (1554–65) and his sons, Murtaza I (1565–88) and Burhan II (1591–95).<sup>2</sup> Their reigns provided a period of political stability, to which a small group of brilliant portraits, mainly drawings, can be ascribed, before the civil wars of the late 1590s and the Mughal capture of the capital in 1600 plunged the country into chaos.

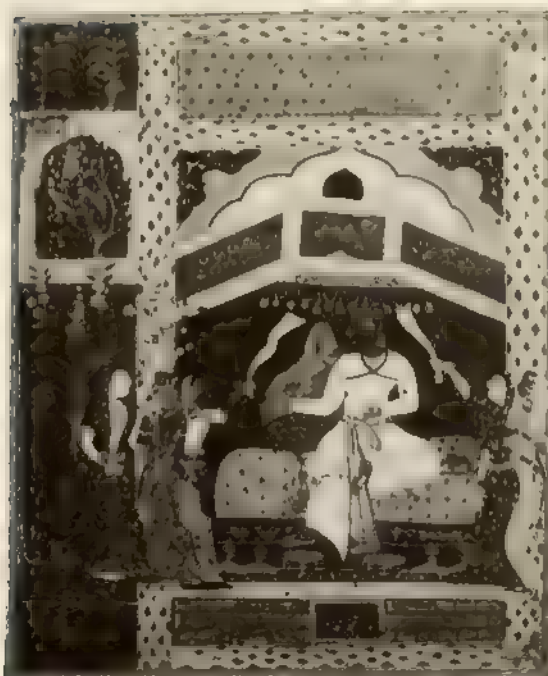
The earliest surviving paintings are the twelve illustrations to the history of the reign of Husain Nizam Shah I, written by Aftabi, entitled the *Tarif-i husain shahi*, in the Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona.<sup>3</sup> Although the manuscript is unfinished and lacks a colophon, internal evidence permits precise dating.

Sultan Husain had formed alliances with the sultans of Golconda, Bijapur and Bidar, formerly bitter enemies, to check the growing strength of the Hindu empire of Vijayanagar. The combined Muslim armies defeated the Hindus in January 1565. The rest of Husain's reign was uneventful. After months of celebration, he died in June of the same year, possibly from overindulgence in pleasures which his new wealth and prestige had encouraged.<sup>4</sup>

The *Tarif* describes the virtues of Husain and his wife Khanzada Humayun. Although the sultan's death is not mentioned, the defeat of the Vijayanagar army is described and illustrated. Since the Vijayanagar campaign figures so vividly and the rule of both Husain and his queen is stressed, the manuscript was probably produced in 1565, sometime between the sultan's victory and his death, not during the queen's regency (1565–69), as has been suggested.<sup>5</sup> After bitter clashes with Bijapur, Khanzada Humayun grew unpopular; her son, influenced by his tutor, imprisoned her in Shivner fort in 1569.

Few women enjoyed such political power in medieval India. We would almost expect the





1. *Sultan Husain Nizam Shah enthroned*  
A page (fol. 20b) from the *Tarif-i husain shahi*  
Ahmadnagar, 1565 15.9 × 12.7 cm  
Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona  
See col. pl. 1 on p. 33



2. *A tree blossoming at the queen of Ahmadnagar's touch*  
A page (fol. 29a) from the *Tarif-i husain shahi*  
Ahmadnagar, 1565  
16.9 × 12.7 cm  
Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona

queen to appear side by side with her husband in the *Tarif*'s paintings, were it not for the complete absence of female portraiture in Islamic art. Women in Persian miniatures are invariably the heroines of poetic romances. Indeed, the *Tarif* proves to be highly unorthodox, for the queen appears in six of its twelve illustrations.

The paintings depict court life (fols 20b, 21b, 26b, 36a and 40b) and the campaign against Vijayanagar (fols 34b, 43b, 44a, 45b, 46b and 47a).<sup>6</sup> The most poetic, fol. 29a, shows the ancient *dohada* theme: a tree bursts into bloom at the touch of a beautiful and virtuous young woman (2). In the five court scenes, a mysteriously indistinct form shares Sultan Husain Nizam Shah's throne. It is a woman in an orange tie-dyed *sari*, the same figure as in the *dohada* scene. Partly scratched away but still visible, in fol. 20b, she sits perched on the sultan's knee like the consort of a Hindu god (1 and col. pl. 1). And consort she certainly is, for, given the politics of the realm and the subject of the text, she must be Queen Humayun.<sup>7</sup>

The paintings are a visual account of her rise and fall. Depicted in 1565 at the height of her power, her figure was removed from the manuscript in 1569, probably at the order of her son. In fol. 29a (2), the *dohada* scene, she does not accompany the king so the vandal, not realizing that the central figure was the queen, did not bother to remove her.





3. Sultan Husain Nizam Shah  
viewing an elephant  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1565  
Salar Jang Museum,  
Hyderabad

The style of the *Tarif* resembles painting done for the Khalji dynasty at Mandu, capital of Malwa, nearly four hundred kilometres to the north in central India. Few Mandu manuscripts have survived: they include an illustrated dictionary in the British Library,<sup>8</sup> a *Bustan* in the National Museum of India,<sup>9</sup> and the beautiful cook book, the *Nimat nama*, in the India Office Library, which contains favourite recipes of Sultan Ghiyas ud din Shah (1469–1500) and his son, Nasir ud din (1500–10).<sup>10</sup>

The *Nimat nama* is an amalgam of remarkably divergent sources, including fifteenth-century Turkman elements from Shiraz and a western Indian ('Jain') contribution from nearby Hindu centres. The female figures in the *Tarif*, like those of the *Nimat nama*, are elegantly elongated with huge disk earrings and tubular necklaces. Both manuscripts may be survivors of a once widespread style that embraced both Malwa and the northern Deccan.

A drawing in the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, of a huge man approaching a tiny elephant and *mahout*, is the only other related work (3).<sup>11</sup> The man so closely resembles Sultan Husain, as depicted in the *Tarif*, that we can assume he is the same king, painted by the same artist. There is however a new attempt at Persian refinement, not apparent in the *Tarif*. A leafy arabesque fills the background and there are rippling contours everywhere, imitating the calligraphic elegance of contemporary Persian drawings, especially noticeable in the elephant's saddle blanket and the hem of the sultan's skirt.

This little drawing is the link between the simple illustrations of the *Tarif* and the two portraits of the sultan of Ahmadnagar, probably painted a decade or so later. The first, in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, has been known for over fifty years and was long considered to be from Bijapur (4 and col. pl. 11).<sup>12</sup> The second, in the State Library, Rampur, depicts the same prince and is by the same hand (5).<sup>13</sup> Both portraits, inscribed *nizam shah*, the name of the Ahmadnagar ruling house, are of such extraordinary quality, and are so intensely moving that we are suddenly aware of entering one of the greatest phases of Indian painting. The refined mystical sense of this artist, who is here called the Paris painter, gives these royal





4. *Sultan Murtaza (?) Nizam Shah enthroned*  
Attributed here to the Paris painter  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1575 23.5 x 20.5 cm

Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Supplément Persan  
1572, fol. 26  
See col. pl. II on p. 34

portraits a quiet religious intensity that is fully equal to the finest devotional painting of any age, East or West. His figures have a visionary gentleness and splendour which bring to mind great Byzantine icons.

In the Paris portrait a young king, enthroned, with adolescent down on his cheeks and a fully developed moustache (7), presents gold to a courtier (6), while a small boy, wearing a childishly tied turban, rushes to the throne offering *pan* (8). The sultan, who is clearly related to the figure in the Salar Jang drawing (3), has a similar square moustache, pursed lips and frothy hair.

The artist was obviously awed by the royal presence, and we share his feelings through this stark vision of royal magnificence. In the Rampur painting, the same king, wearing similar robes, relaxes from the rigours of governing (5). Although he is in a different mood and pose,

5. Sultan Murtaza (?) Nizam Shah  
relaxing

Attributed here to the Paris painter  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1575  
State Library, Rampur, India,  
album 4







6. Detail of 4



7. Detail of 4



8. Detail of 4



9. Detail of 4

all sinuous curves, the effect is again of a momentary glimpse into an effulgent world of power, seen through the eyes of a humble artist.

Dark stippling on the gold background creates a sense of weight and volume that is profoundly Indian, though the technique itself probably derives from European prints which arrived at the Deccani courts through Goa. The figures have a tense, sensuous, almost swollen quality which Indian artists, since ancient times, have given their depictions of fertility spirits (*yakshas*) and deities, suggesting the energy of superhuman status. The whole surface is composed of minute parallel strokes of colour which merge at a distance (9). Swags and curls enliven the ends of clothing, a perennial Ahmadnagar characteristic.

Who is the sultan in these two magnificent portraits? He is young and beardless, attended by courtiers his own age. He bears a certain resemblance to Sultan Husain, in the *Tarif* and the Salar Jang drawing, although it is doubtful whether such 'advanced' artists worked for Husain. The young king may therefore be one of Husain's successors. Since, in 1595, total chaos descended upon the unfortunate kingdom, there are really only two possibilities; either Murtaza (1565-88), or Burhan (1591-95), both Husain's sons.

The Paris portrait bears a rough Persian inscription on the reverse which reads, *burhan nizam al-mulk* and *kar-i auwal-i dakan* ('the earliest Deccani work'). The inscription, which uses the derogatory Mughal term 'nizam al-mulk' rather than the royal Deccani title 'nizam shah' is clearly neither Deccani, nor contemporary with the painting; it cannot therefore be considered reliable. The inscription on the Rampur portrait, just above the canopy, in an elegant hand, uses the Deccani title 'nizam shah', but neglects to mention which one.

Barrett concluded that the Paris portrait depicted Burhan and that 'this picture would be dated about 1600 irrespective of its subject', emphasizing its debt to the technical developments in painting which had occurred at the Mughal court during the reign of Akbar (1556-1605).<sup>14</sup> The two portraits are, in fact, closer to the style of earlier Mughal paintings, that is c. 1570 and before,<sup>15</sup> than to the style of the 1590s. On fol. 68b of the *Ashiq* manuscript, dated 1568, we see an enthroned prince, very nearly the mirror image of the sultan in the Paris portrait, and a short stocky courtier running up to the throne, just like the young Deccani page.<sup>16</sup> All the figures have the titanic proportions of the Ahmadnagar style. The puckered lips, cat-like eyes and pointed chins of Ahmadnagar portraits also show a close relationship to even earlier Mughal works, especially to those by the Iranian artists, Mir Sayyid Ali,<sup>17</sup> Abd us Samad<sup>18</sup> and Dost Mohammed,<sup>19</sup> whom the Mughal emperor Humayun had brought with him to India. It is possible that the sultans of Ahmadnagar employed Persian painters of the same calibre and that a synthesis of Indian and Iranian elements occurred in the Deccan, as profound as that which took place at the Mughal court.

Given the relationship of Ahmadnagar painting to the earliest phase of the Mughal school, the Paris and Rampur paintings may date from c. 1575 rather than c. 1600. An early dating means that the classic moment of the Ahmadnagar school occurred during Murtaza's reign (1565-88), not Burhan's (1591-95). Murtaza's reign was longer and more peaceful than Burhan's; it was also the cultural zenith of the kingdom, when the poets Zuhuri and Urfi emigrated from Iran to Ahmadnagar.<sup>20</sup> The youthful appearance of the sultan in both portraits is more appropriate for a portrait of Murtaza in the 1570s, when he was in his twenties, than for Burhan who ascended the throne at the age of thirty-five, already, in the words of the historian Firishta, 'advanced in years'.<sup>21</sup>

A third painting by the Paris painter completes his known oeuvre.<sup>22</sup> It depicts a prince of





10. (LEFT) *Young prince riding a horse*  
 Attributed here to the Paris painter  
 Ahmadnagar, c. 1575  
 11 × 10.5 cm  
 Private collection

11. (ABOVE) Detail of 10

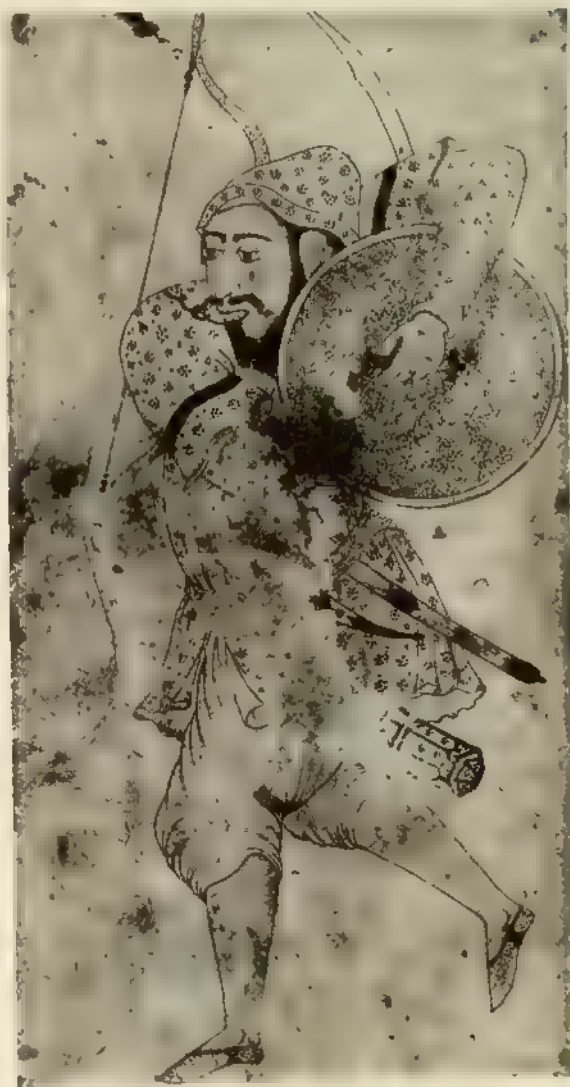
twelve or thirteen, wearing the familiar white muslin *jama* over blue pyjamas, riding through a golden field of elegantly stylized plants (10–11). The boy may be the sultan's son – for whom the artist has little fear. The result is a playfully intimate picture, full of childish excitement. Our artist again paints delicate foam-like hair and gorgeously tooled gold surfaces, applying pigments in parallel strokes. He also introduces that magical 'breeze', so often encountered in later Deccani painting, which whips through elegant plants and delicate tropical textiles.

The primitive beauty of the *Tarif*, painted in 1565, gives little indication of this extraordinary school of portraiture. There must have been Deccani painting of a more sophisticated level alongside the *Tarif*'s powerful, but simple style. Certain Islamic paintings do seem to anticipate developments in Deccani art during the second half of the sixteenth century, but it is impossible to ascertain whether they were done in the Middle East or in India. Although Muslim sultans ruled the Deccan from the fourteenth century, encouraging men of culture to come to their courts from all over the Islamic world, no painting can yet be connected to the Deccan with certainty before the *Tarif*.

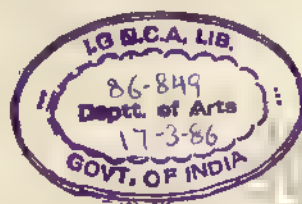
Two fierce warriors (12–13) may represent the kind of painting which gave rise to the achievements of the Paris painter. Usually described as 'Turkman warriors', obviously drawn to face each other in the same album, one is now in the Freer Gallery of Art, the other in the Boston Museum. Originally described by Martin as 'about AD 1430, Timurid school',<sup>23</sup> the emphasis on the weight and volume of the human body is more Indian than Middle Eastern.



12. *Turkman warrior*  
Iran, Central Asia or Deccan  
Late fifteenth or sixteenth century  
23.8 × 13.3 cm  
Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC, 29.79



13. *Turkman warrior*  
Iran, Central Asia or Deccan  
Late fifteenth or sixteenth century  
24 × 11 cm  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 14.543.  
Francis Bartlett Fund







14. *A dervish*  
Iran, Central Asia or Deccan  
Sixteenth century  
21 × 13.2 cm  
Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection,  
Bombay

The way certain details of costume and anatomy have been isolated and transformed into beautiful shapes, resembling the full, natural forms of plants and flowers, is also Indian, quite unlike the abstract tendencies of Persian art. Moreover, the plumed cap in the Freer picture and the speckling on the clothes and shields of both warriors are typical of later Ahmadnagar conventions.

A third portrait, a dervish, in the Jehangir Collection, Bombay, is similar in mood (14).<sup>24</sup> The ponderous curves of the holyman's fleshy body are very Indian, and, like later Deccani dervishes (60), rich brocades and a sumptuous gilt begging bowl contrast with the subject's

ascetic rôle. All three paintings may have been painted in the Deccan, possibly at Ahmadnagar, in the late fifteenth or sixteenth century; or, if the artist worked in Iran or Central Asia, his style was somehow transplanted to the Deccan.

A tiny drawing of a young prince, seated upon a huge throne, holding a moon-faced mirror, may be a sketch by the Paris painter, though more likely by a close follower (15).<sup>25</sup> It is in an abbreviated version of the classic Ahmadnagar mode. The youth has the same pursed lips, pear-shaped face, shaded chest and chains of charm containers strung round his neck as the figures in the Paris portrait. This drawing, possibly a study for a larger painting, with tentative strokes of the brush and corrections clearly visible, has a border of marbled paper, a technique much in vogue both in the Deccan and in Ottoman Turkey.

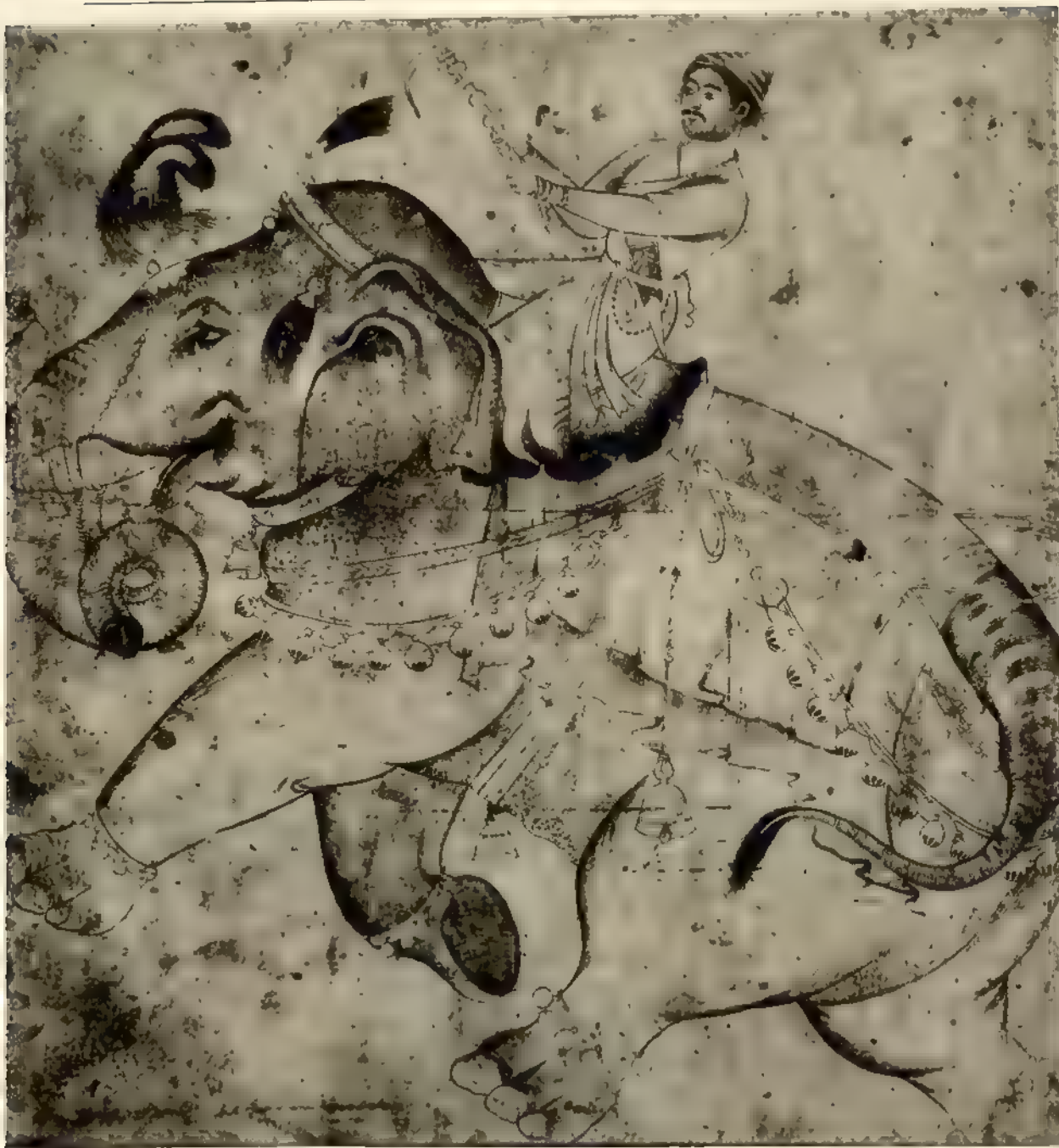
A group of five superb line drawings, with some colour, belong to a slightly later phase of Ahmadnagar painting, possibly to the reign of Murtaza's brother, Burhan II (1591–95). Burhan had spent years of exile at the court of the Mughal emperor Akbar during Murtaza's reign, and it is not surprising that the style of painting he patronized on his return was strongly marked by Mughal taste. For example, the *Running elephant*, in an American private collection, has the fast and furious mood of Akbar's illustrated manuscripts (16).<sup>26</sup> However, strong decorative patterns, like the elephant's coiled trunk, curved tail and stippled hide, dominate the painting in a way which is alien to Mughal realism. Although the drawing may be twenty years later than the Paris portrait, the artist retains the earlier taste for wavy contours, heavy shading and cat-like eyes.

The *Royal picnic*, in the India Office Library, London, probably depicts Burhan Nizam Shah himself (17).<sup>27</sup> He sits on a canopied throne, set out in a garden, listening to a singer, while servants lay a sumptuous feast. The style so resembles that of the *Running elephant* that the artist must be the same: the facial types are identical and the dark knots in the stippled tree trunk next to the sultan's throne are just like the cavity of the elephant's ear.

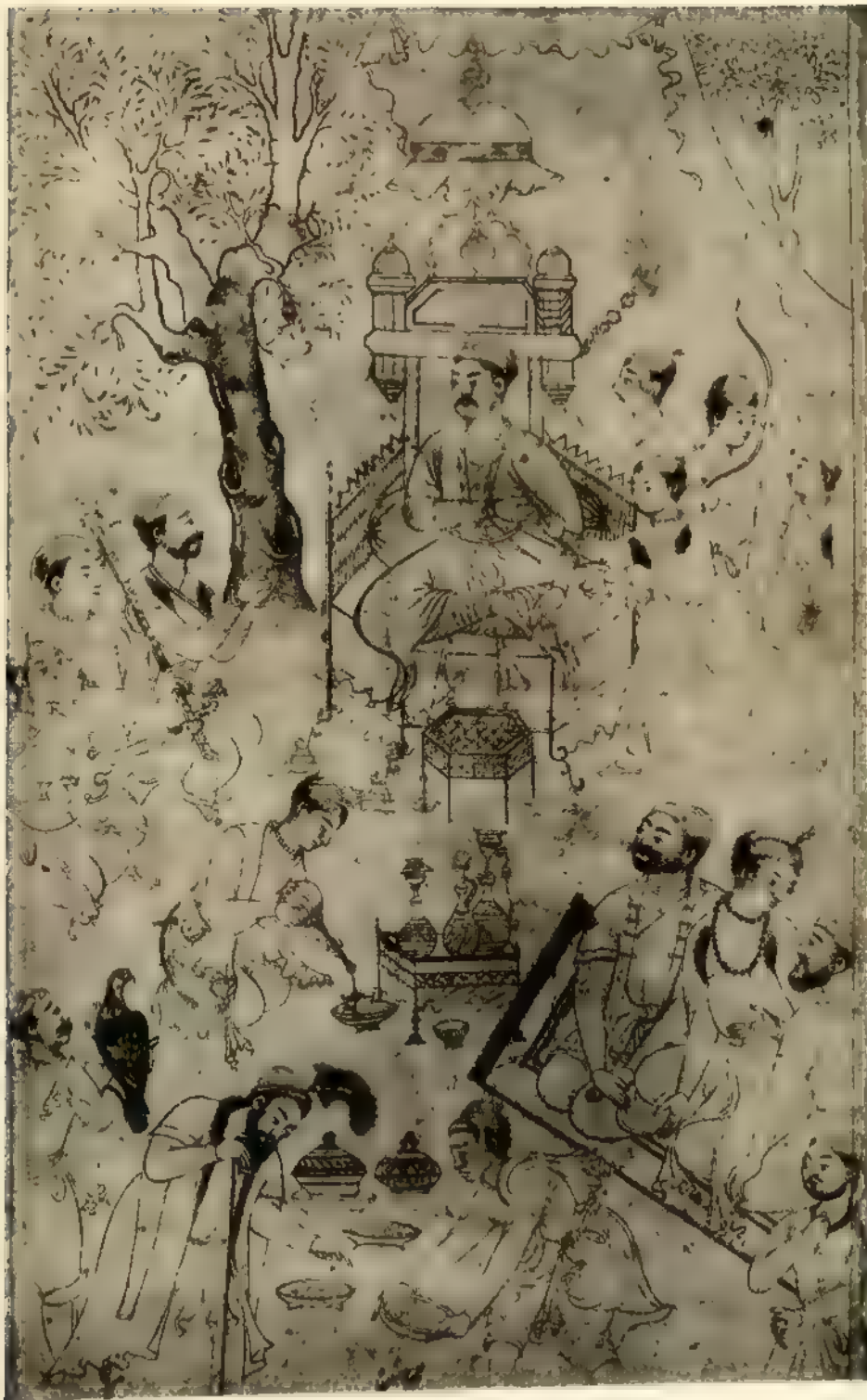


15. *Young prince enthroned*  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1580  
8.3 × 5.8 cm  
Private collection





16. *Running elephant*  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1590–95  
19.5 × 16.8 cm  
Private collection



17. *Royal picnic*  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1590-95  
20.6 × 13 cm  
India Office Library, London, 401



The shape of the throne, the sultan's pose and even the young page rushing to offer *pan* are rather spiritless adaptations of the Paris portrait (4). In fact, the *Royal picnic* is a pastiche, incorporating shapes and figures from earlier Ahmadnagar painting, but lacking the vigour of the Paris portrait, or even of the *Running elephant*. It would seem that Ahmadnagar's rich artistic tradition had fully blossomed by the 1590s and was already showing signs of decay.

The drawing of a scholar lost in thought before an open book, in the Musée Guimet, Paris, is by a related hand (18).<sup>28</sup> Drawn in thin, watery ink, it is a preparatory sketch showing the artist's initial strokes and corrections. The rippled sash ends, the turban style and the facial type are typical of the school. The scholar closely resembles the bearded chamberlain, mirror reversed, directing the servants in the lower left-hand corner of the *Royal picnic* (17). There is also a similarity to the young scholar in the Binney Collection, signed by Mir Sayyid Ali,<sup>29</sup>



18. (LEFT) *Scholar meditating before an open book*  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1590–95  
14.2 × 9.6 cm  
Musée Guimet, Paris, E.O. 3577 (b)

19. (OPPOSITE) *Young prince embraced by a small girl*  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1580–95  
15.3 × 15.9 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection,  
San Diego

who in turn resembles some of the attendant figures in the Paris portrait. Strangely enough the Guimet page also bears a written attribution to Mir Sayyid Ali. Is it possible that the Mir, who retired from Akbar's court soon after coming to India, went to work at Ahmadnagar? Or did one of his colleagues? Such possibilities cannot be excluded.

An ideally beautiful youth in the Binney Collection, embraced by a tiny girl, kneeling on a floor laid with elegant trays of food, drink and *pan*, is more Persianate than other Ahmadnagar drawings (19).<sup>30</sup> The artist creates starkly powerful shapes with a calligraphic sweep of his brush, producing a Deccani variation on a Turco-Iranian theme. The boy wears the latest fashions of the Ahmadnagar court: a *jama* with widely crossed lapels, a purse hanging from a gold belt and bullet-shaped charm containers strung round the upper arms.

Another drawing of a youth kneeling, similarly attired, is closely related (20).<sup>31</sup> His face is





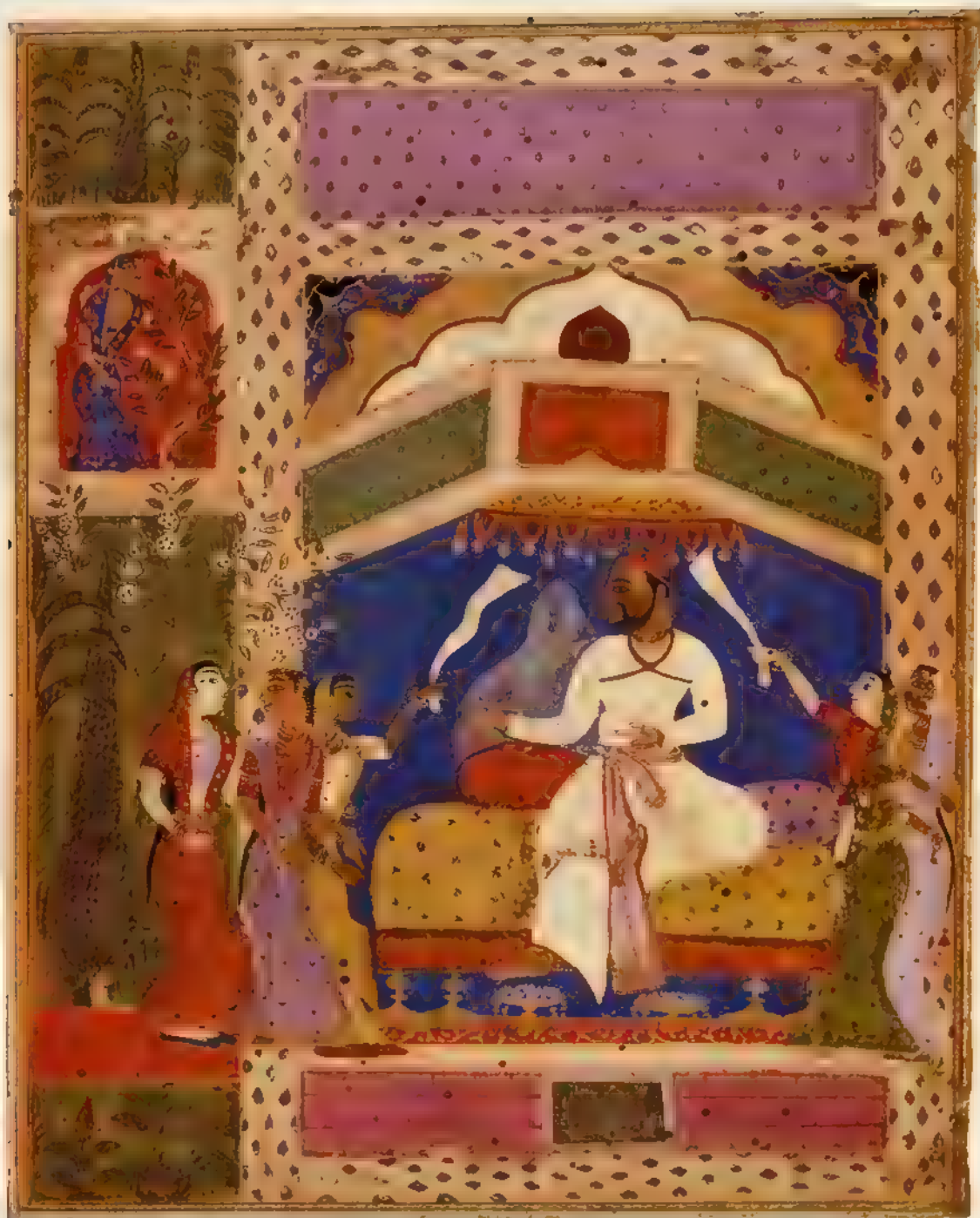


20. *Young prince kneeling*  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1580–95, or  
a later copy  
Present location unknown

remarkably like the Mir Sayyid Ali type. Perhaps this artist was trained by the Mir, either in India or in Iran. A feebleness of line, however, particularly apparent in the skirt and sash ends, suggests that this work is a later copy, after a sixteenth-century Ahmadnagar drawing.

At least four of the ten works which we have attributed to Ahmadnagar, excluding the *Tarif* illustrations, are portraits of adolescent princes. Another three depict beardless young men with light moustaches. All except three are line drawings, lightly touched with gold and colour. Although it is difficult to generalize, given the number of works which must now be lost, Ahmadnagar seems to have been the Deccani centre where the Turco-Iranian taste for elegant drawing was most appreciated.

Sultan Murtaza Nizam Shah's reign (1565–88) was the longest period of stability during the second half of the sixteenth century. Except for the brief reign of Burhan II (1591–95), the



1. Sultan Husain Nizam Shah enthroned  
 A page from the *Tarīf-i husain shahi*  
 Ahmadnagar, 1565  
 15.9 × 12.7cm  
 Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona  
 See p. 18 and black and white illustration 1





11. *Sultan Murtaza (?) Nizam Shah enthroned*  
 Attributed here to the Paris painter  
 Ahmadnagar, c.1575

23.5 × 20.5 cm  
 Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris  
 See p. 19 and black and white illustrations 4, 6–9

last two decades of the century witnessed a violent succession of youthful sultans and pretenders. After Murtaza's death in 1588, his son Husain II ruled for one year; his age was sixteen or seventeen. He was succeeded by his cousin Ismail (1589-91), who was about ten when he ascended the throne. After Burhan's death in 1595, there was a series of child kings and pretenders whose careers usually ended in murder, real power remaining in the hands of feuding regents. These sultans were Ibrahim (1595), Ahmad (1595) and Bahadur (1595-1600). The drawings of royal youths probably depict one or more of these unfortunate kings.<sup>32</sup> If a slightly earlier dating proves correct for the Binney page (19), it may depict the meeting in 1582 of Crown Prince Husain, at the age of ten, with the little girl who was to become his wife, a Bijapuri princess, sister of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II.<sup>33</sup>

## NOTES

1. See pp. 153-54.
2. Shyam (1966), chs 4-6.
3. Sherwani (1974), p. 235, n. 79; Barrett (1958), p. 6.
4. Shyam (1966), pp. 141-42.
5. Barrett (1958), p. 3.
6. The court scenes are published in Barrett (1958), pl. 1 and Barrett and Gray, p. 116; the paintings depicting the Vijayanagar campaign are published in Heras, pls 5-8.
7. I would like to thank Robert Skelton for bringing this figure to my attention and suggesting an identification for it.
8. Titley (1965).
9. Ettinghausen (1959).
10. Skelton (1959).
11. I am grateful to Stuart Cary Welch for bringing this unpublished drawing to my attention.
12. *Supplément persan* 1572, fol. 26. Barrett (1958), pl. 5; Blochet (1926), pl. 109.
13. Previously unpublished, but described in Welch (1963b), p. 11.
14. Barrett (1958), p. 14.
15. For example, the *Tuti nama* in the Cleveland Museum, Ohio; the *Hamza nama*, mainly in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London and the Museum for Decorative Arts, Vienna; the 1567 *Gulistan* of Sadi in the British Library (Or. 5302); the 1568 *Ashiq* manuscript in the National Museum of India, New Delhi; and the 1570 *Anwar-i suhaili* in the School of Oriental and African Studies, London.
16. Sahay, p. 30.
17. Two works possibly painted by Mir Sayyid Ali in Mughal Kabul or Delhi during the 1550s, are the *Young Muslim scholar* (Welch (1973), no. 52; Binney (1973), no. 10) and the *Kneeling courtier* (Welch (1976), no. 6).
18. The *House of Timur*, a large painting on cloth in the British Museum, may be the work of Abd us Samad: Stchoukine (1929b), pls 3-4.
19. For a portrait of Shah Abul Maali, signed by Dost Muhammad, see Sotheby's, London, 11 April 1972, lot 18. It is now in the collection of Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, Geneva.
20. Shyam (1966), pp. 380-84.
21. Frishta, p. 172.
22. Private collection. Previously unpublished.
23. Martin, pl. 55; Atil, pl. 8.
24. Khandalavala and Chandra (1965), col. pl. B. Although the dervish is finely painted, the bow and the musical instrument which he holds in his right hand are crudely executed, probably added at a comparatively recent date.
25. Private collection, on loan to the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.
26. Welch (1963b), p. 11; Welch (1976), no. 36.
27. Falk and Archer, no. 401.
28. B.O. 3577 (b). Previously unpublished.
29. Binney (1973), no. 10.
30. Binney (1973), no. 120; Welch (1976), no. 29.
31. Present location unknown. Sutton, p. 114.
32. For an account of these young rulers, see Shyam (1966), chs 4, 6-8.
33. *Ibid.*, p. 176.



## APPENDIX: *Malik Ambar, dictator of Ahmadnagar (1600–26)*

Although the Mughals captured Ahmadnagar fort in 1600, they could not secure the entire state. The great nobles, Muslims and Marathas alike, resisted the invaders for nearly four decades. The rough Deccani terrain, dotted with many nearly impregnable forts, sheltered the rebels and protected the southern kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda from Mughal conquest.

The most extraordinary nobleman was Malik Ambar, a former African slave, who as a child had been sold to an Arab merchant in Baghdad travelling to the Deccan. Malik quickly rose in Ahmadnagar service, supporting Abhang Khan, another African, who led the faction against Queen Chand Bibi in 1596 during the civil war. After 1600, Malik harassed the occupying Mughal army with guerilla tactics and won the support of the Marathas, a martial tribe of the Deccan, comparable to the Rajputs in northern India.

Malik set up a Nizam Shahi ruler, Murtaza II (1600–10), appointed himself prime minister, married the young king to his own daughter, and managed to reconquer almost all of the kingdom by 1605. The Mughals alternated with Malik's forces in possession of Ahmadnagar fort but, by 1620, Malik had retaken the capital, besieged Burhanpur, the Mughal base in the northern Deccan, and penetrated deep into Malwa, in the very heart of the Mughal empire. Meanwhile, he had his first royal protégé poisoned in 1610 and replaced with a more docile puppet, a minor Nizam Shahi prince who took the name Burhan III. Malik was poised to expel the Mughals once and for all from the Deccan when he suddenly died in 1626, a year before Jahangir.<sup>1</sup>

Malik's son, Fath Khan, entitled Aziz al Mulk, lacked his father's genius, while Jahangir's successor Shah Jahan proved more aggressive than his father. Internecine warfare, the bane of every Deccani state, weakened resistance to the Mughals. In 1632, Fath Khan murdered Burhan III and replaced him with yet another king, Husain III, a boy of ten.

In the same year, the Maratha chief Shahji, an Ahmadnagar zamindar and father of Shivaji, conquered a large part of the kingdom and set up his own pretender. Shortly thereafter, Shah

Jahan captured the fort of Daulatabad, along with Fath Khan and Husain III. It was now Shahji's turn to defy the Mughals. With Bijapuri aid, he resisted until 1636, when a huge Mughal army forced Bijapur to acknowledge Mughal suzerainty and to partition Ahmadnagar. Shahji's pretender was sent to the prison at Gwalior, while the brave Maratha was taken into Bijapuri service and given all Nizam Shahi territory south of the Godavari River in repayment. Thus, as Ahmadnagar disappeared, a new Maratha power base was born.<sup>2</sup>

Nine paintings can be attributed to Ahmadnagar during these turbulent forty years. Eight of them depict Africans (21–22), while one is of a young fair-skinned prince (23). The only likely patron is Malik Ambar himself. Contemporary histories insist that he was a generous patron of the arts. He founded and embellished the city of Kirki, later to become the Mughal capital of Aurangabad. On the other hand, the puppet kings Murtaza II (1600–10), Burhan III (1610–32) and Husain III (1632) lacked resources. In fact, it was agreed in 1602 'to give the fort of Ausa for the king's residence and the few adjacent villages for his maintenance'.<sup>3</sup>

Of the eight portraits of Africans, four appear to be early seventeenth-century Deccani paintings, one is probably a mid or late seventeenth-century Deccani copy and three are early seventeenth-century Mughal works signed by the court artist, Hashim, probably executed after Deccani originals in the Mughal collection. The eight are in:

1. The Edwin Binney 3rd Collection.<sup>4</sup> The subject is a short African wearing a diaphanous white *jama*, with his waist sash drawn through a metal pouch in Ahmadnagar style. There is no inscription. The proportions of the body are exaggerated with little understanding of realism in the Mughal manner. Probably Ahmadnagar, c. 1610.

2. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 17.3103 (21).<sup>5</sup> This version somewhat resembles the Binney portrait, but is more Mughal in its naturalism and formal spirit. The Persian inscription at the bottom of the page is so damaged that it

is illegible, although Coomaraswamy, in the Boston Museum catalogue, claimed to be able to read the name of Malik Ambar. Probably Ahmadnagar, c. 1610–20.

3. The Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares. This unpublished painting is very similar to the above two portraits. The green background is flaking in the same way as the Boston page. In the top left-hand corner, there is a damaged, illegible

Persian inscription. The background may have been overpainted by a Mughal artist because, where it has flaked away, an intense blue colour and Chinese clouds are revealed, perhaps the original Deccani background.<sup>6</sup> Probably Ahmadnagar, c. 1610–20.

4. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 13.3103 (22).<sup>7</sup> The subject is an African who is taller and slimmer than nos 1–3. He is clearly a different



21. (ABOVE) *Malik Ambar*  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1610–20  
11.5 × 8.1 cm  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 17.3103

22. (RIGHT) *Fath Khan, Malik Ambar's son (?)*  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1620  
36.3 × 23.5 cm  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 13.3103





individual, with a hooked nose unlike the others' short thick noses. His turban resembles a fez. The background is pink and flaking. The inscription, according to Coomaraswamy, 'on the modern mount', identifies the subject as Malik Ambar. Probably Ahmadnagar, c. 1620.

5. The National Museum of India, New Delhi.<sup>8</sup> The subject, pose and background are identical to no. 4, but the brushwork is cruder and the colours are garish. The inscription on the reverse identifies the subject as Malik Ambar. This may be a later version of no. 4, possibly painted at Golconda, c. 1650–80.

6. The Musée Guimet, Paris, 7.172.<sup>9</sup> This version is a Mughal painting, signed by the court artist Hashim. The pose is based on Deccani versions nos 1–3. Mughal, c. 1620–30.

7. The Victoria and Albert Museum, London, I.M.1925.21. The style and iconography of this version are almost identical to the Guimet painting. It is inscribed in Persian: 'Portrait of Ambar, the work of Hashim'. Mughal, c. 1620–30.

8. A private collection, formerly in the collection of the Baron Maurice de Rothschild.<sup>10</sup> This is another Mughal painting signed by Hashim, but the subject is of a third iconographic type, distinct from both nos 1–3, 6–7 and nos 4–5. The conical turban is topped by a large flap. As the face slightly resembles nos 1–3, 6–7, perhaps he is the son and successor of Malik Ambar, Fath Khan. Mughal, c. 1620.

There is also a portrait of a young, fair-skinned prince:

9. The Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 13.1397 (23).<sup>11</sup> The subject is a sallow, sad, fragile-looking youth, inscribed in the upper left-hand corner in Persian, *nizam shah bahri*. According to Firishta, 'bahri' was a title attached to the Nizam Shahi dynasty, the Persian corruption of the Hindu name of the founder of the dynasty. The boy may be Burhan III, who was placed on the throne by Malik in 1610, after the murder of Murtaza II (1600–10). Since Burhan III was born in 1605, the painting may be dated c. 1620–30, when he was between fifteen and twenty-five. He was murdered in 1632.



23. Sultan Burhan Nizam Shah III (?)  
Ahmadnagar, c. 1620–30  
17 × 9.2 cm  
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, 13.1397

An identification of the African portraits was first attempted by Coomaraswamy.<sup>5</sup> He believed that the stout, short African (nos 1-3, 6-7) was Malik Ambar and that the taller African with an aquiline nose (nos 4-5) was Fath Khan, his son. Stchoukine accepted his arguments,<sup>9-10</sup> but Khandalavala challenged them in an article on the Delhi portrait depicting the tall African (no. 5), which also has an inscription on the reverse, identifying the subject as Malik Ambar.<sup>8</sup> More recently, Binney published the portrait in his collection (no. 1),<sup>4</sup> which we consider the earliest Ahmadnagar depiction of Malik Ambar, as 'Golconda (?), c. 1660-1680', supporting Khandalavala's identification of the subject as Abhang Khan.

After reconsidering the existing evidence, the author believes that the short African (nos 1-3, 6-7) is Malik Ambar. The surviving Deccani portraits of this individual bear illegible inscriptions and are therefore incapable of settling the controversy. However, the two Mughal portraits by the court artist Hashim are based on this iconographic type, and one, in the Victoria and Albert Museum (no. 7), bears an inscription, probably in Jahangir's hand, identifying the African as Malik. As Mughal portraiture is noted for its realism, this painting probably reproduces Malik's features faithfully from a now lost Deccani original. The African in Delhi and Boston (nos 4-5), wearing a fez-like turban, may then be Malik Ambar's son, Fath Khan.

## NOTES

1. For Malik Ambar's early life, see Shyam (1968), ch. 2; for his resistance to the Mughals, see *ibid.*, ch. 3 and Shyam (1966), ch. 7.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 313-31.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 248.
4. Binney (1973), no. 131.
5. Coomaraswamy (1927), fig. 3; Coomaraswamy (1930), pl. 37; Khandalavala (1955-56), fig. 3.
6. I would like to thank Dr Anand Krishna for showing me this portrait and pointing out the repainting in the background.

7. Coomaraswamy (1930), pl. 38; Khandalavala (1955-56), fig. 1.
8. Khandalavala (1955-56), pl. 8.
9. Stchoukine (1929a), no. 40; Stchoukine (1929b), pl. 29; Khandalavala (1955-56), fig. 2.
10. Stchoukine (1935), fig. 5; Khandalavala (1955-56), fig. 4.
11. Coomaraswamy (1930), pl. 38.



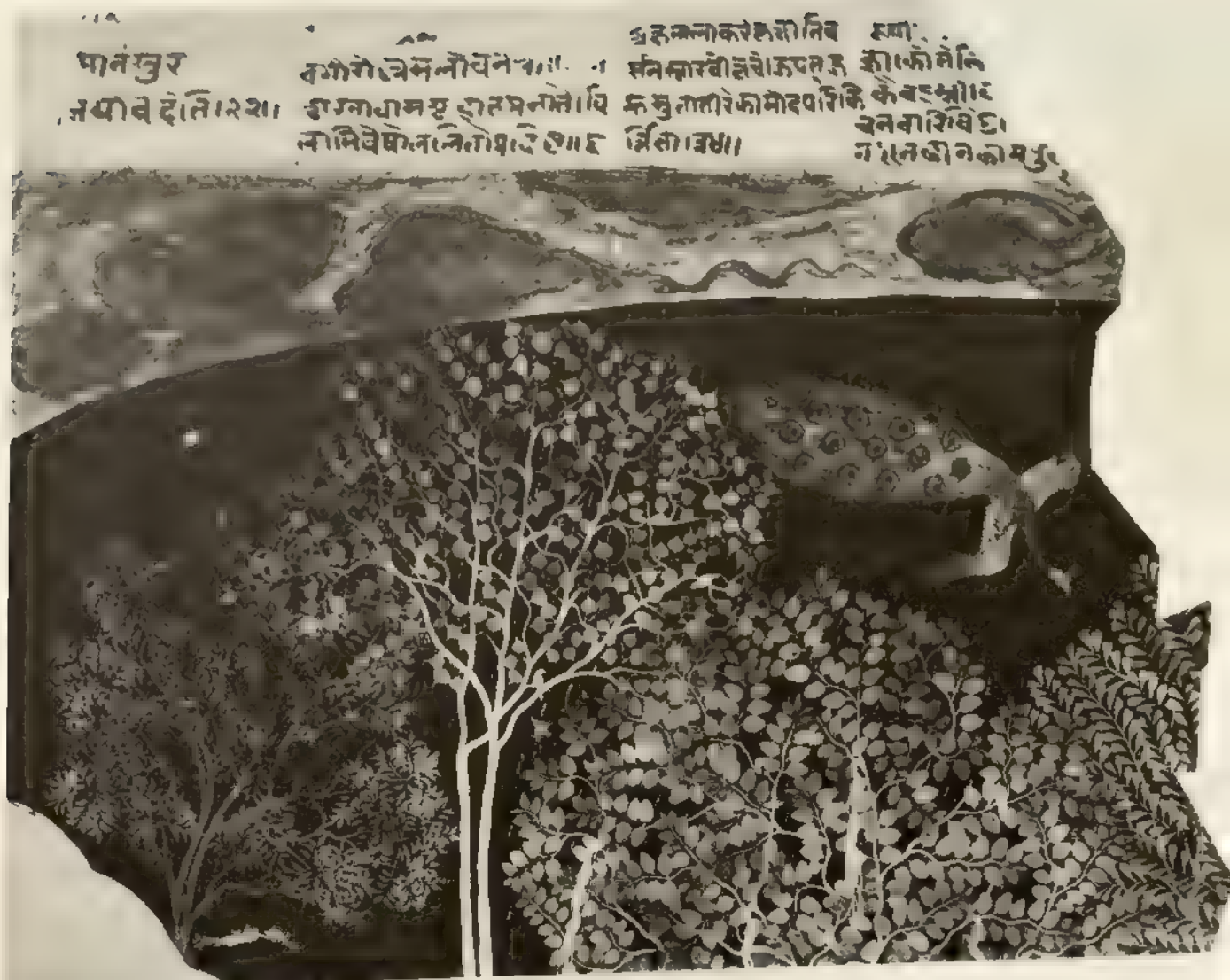
# The Northern Deccan

THE MAJOR PROBLEM in our understanding of Deccani painting continues to be the splendid group of late sixteenth-century *ragamala* paintings which have usually been assigned to either Bijapur or Ahmadnagar (24–31 and col. pls III–V). At the present time, we can do little more than restate the few facts about them which have so far emerged and make suggestions regarding a possible provenance. The main difficulty is that, despite their mature, confident and remarkably expressive style, they fail to relate to any of the known schools of painting practised at the three Deccani centres, least of all to the Ahmadnagar court, the provenance which has been most frequently put forward for them.

It is not even possible to ascertain the exact number of surviving paintings, for published accounts do not agree.<sup>1</sup> Excluding the possible group – unpublished and unseen by the author – in the Roerich Collection, Bangalore, there may be as many as fifteen or sixteen paintings, but these figures are unfortunately based more on hearsay than on hard facts. At present, nine can be accounted for. They are a *Peacock in a rainstorm at night* (24 and col. pl. III),<sup>2</sup> *Gauri Ragini* (25 and col. pl. IV),<sup>3</sup> *Hindola Raga* (26 and col. pl. V),<sup>4</sup> *Sri Raga* (27),<sup>5</sup> *Patanasika Ragini* (28),<sup>6</sup> *Dhanasri Ragini* (29),<sup>7</sup> *Kamghodi Ragini* (30),<sup>8</sup> a *Prince and ladies in a garden house* (31),<sup>9</sup> and *Malavi Ragini*.<sup>10</sup> Considering the variations in size and quality, these pages are probably by several different hands, working in the same atelier, and they may represent more than one *ragamala*.

One of the finest pages in the group is the fragmentary *Peacock in a rainstorm at night*, about two thirds of the original page size (24 and col. pl. III). In India the rains signal the start of the peacock's mating season; here, a male flies from tree to tree shrieking his mating cry, startling tiny birds roosting in delicate new foliage. Long white rain drops coldly fill the black sky. As rain and peacocks are poetic symbols of unrequited love, the missing portion of the page may have contained a lovesick lady, waiting for a lover who has not come.

*Gauri Ragini*, with its stronger, more formal air, is probably by a different hand (25 and col. pl. IV). Trees grow in sturdy, circular masses, filled with leaves in repeating patterns, quite unlike the sinuous, vein-like branches of the other page. The girls' elongated bodies and sharp features are repeated in *Hindola Raga* (26 and col. pl. V) and *Sri Raga* (27); all three paintings are probably the work of the same artist. His rich, dark colours, especially deep blue and orange, coupled with an extraordinary lightness of design, produce an ethereal magnificence, like medieval stained glass windows.



24. Peacock in a rainstorm at night  
Northern Deccan, late sixteenth century  
15.5 x 19 cm  
Private collection  
See col. pl. III on p. 51

*Patanasika Ragini* (28), *Dhanasri Ragini* (29) and *Kamghodi Ragini* (30) form yet another stylistic group, the work of a third hand. His figures are shorter and his faces are moon shaped with thick eyebrows. Colour, more thinly applied, tends towards light shades of blue, green, pink and grey. He likes architectural settings, often with repeating arcades and domes, avoiding the open-air scenes of his colleagues. His finest surviving work is *Kamghodi Ragini*, a romantic fantasy of subdued colours and fragile shapes (30). A fourth artist, responsible for the *Prince and ladies in a garden house* (31), practises a more naïve style. He had probably been trained in a folk-level tradition and, after joining the workshop, he came under the influence of hand three, for he produces similar delicate effects.



पंतीप्रवणवत्सनाप्रकुरकोकिळनादहृष्टा॥ शामामुद्यस्वादनघूर्णनेत्रागो  
 बुक्ताकिळकोहळेन॥१॥ तरुणारुणसंकशदसनाविजकचुका॥ सहकारव  
 रस्योनःक्रीडतीत्यसखीयुता॥२॥



25. *Gauri Ragini*  
 Northern Deccan, late sixteenth century  
 24.7 × 19 cm  
 Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego  
 See col. pl. IV on p. 52

माकदानानव नवलतालिगिता जीवनात काश्मीरा इमप्रकाष्टतरुचिनेरुमिदने  
 तिरम्ये॥ काश्मीरैदुदुवनरसमुत्तिकुशीनागराजे काडलुचैमदनकलयालिगित॥  
 रसन॥१॥ मनुयनमृगनाडिडावस्यप्रगीरनप्रकररचितभृगोदुतधारानिराराव॥ हदय  
 हतवावासेनसेकोचमुकादिपुनतिभिरिवसीडोसंयमा नोयसन॥ कोकलकलकुंठानिदेप्राय  
 मभूरररकालिसा मसंसयमोन॥ मदमुदलतायानराते समताम्रनलिननवदीकासेलमावी  
 नन॥२॥ आतासात्रा केरासंगिफाणिपलबनोभिरु॥ अरुणोमुकसंवातईदावरसमप्रन॥३॥ १॥



26 Hindola Raga  
 Northern Deccan, late sixteenth century  
 23.8 x 18.3 cm  
 National Museum of India, New Delhi  
 See col. p. v on p. 53







27. *Sri Raga*  
Northern Deccan, late  
sixteenth century  
24 × 20 cm  
Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares

All these pages possess an exquisitely fresh, rural mood, full of the sounds and smells of the countryside, quite unlike the courtly atmosphere of other great Deccani paintings. Some scholars have assigned them to Ahmadnagar, but their naïve charm has little in common with the calligraphic elegance of portraits from that kingdom (4–5, 17–19). However, the strong colours and sturdy figures of the *Tarif-i husain shahi*, painted at Ahmadnagar in 1565 before the great portrait tradition developed there, do bear some resemblance.<sup>11</sup>

Bijapur has also been suggested as a provenance, mainly because of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah's passion for music. Ibrahim was a universal man. He painted, practised calligraphy, wrote poetry, was an accomplished musician and studied both Islamic and Hindu mysticism.<sup>12</sup> His court was a mecca for the most talented artists from all over the Muslim world. Urfi, Zuhuri and other major Persian poets worked there, after leaving troubled Ahmadnagar.

Ibrahim's book of Urdu songs, the *Kitab-i nauras*, is strongly Sanskritic in vocabulary and contains numerous descriptions of *ragas* and *raginis*, with accounts of their moods, activities



28. *Patanasika Ragini*  
Northern Deccan,  
late sixteenth century  
22.1 × 17.5 cm  
National Museum of India,  
New Delhi

and attributes. The nine surviving *ragamala* paintings bear crude Sanskrit inscriptions at the top of the page, often with a few words translated into equally crude Persian, but none of them coincide with Ibrahim's descriptions. Moreover, these inscriptions cannot possibly reflect the brilliant level of culture at Ibrahim's court. Most importantly, none of the paintings bears the least resemblance to portraits known to have been executed at Bijapur during his reign (49–50, 54–55, 57, 59 and 63).

We are unfortunately left with no real evidence concerning the provenance of these remarkable paintings. Their earthiness implies a provincial milieu, not the sophisticated atmosphere of the Bijapur and Ahmadnagar courts. The Sanskrit inscriptions suggest that their patron was a Hindu. Of all surviving Deccani works, they are the closest to the illustrations of the *Tarif*.

It seems likely that this style was prevalent, with some regional variations, throughout a large area that comprised the northern Deccan, Gujarat (to the west) and southern Malwa



(just to the north). Strong colours and elongated figures are characteristic Hindu influences from Rajasthan are strong. A related document is the illustrated cook book, entitled the *Nimat nama*, executed at Mandu, the capital of the Khalji sultans of Malwa, for Sultan Nasir ud din (1500–10).<sup>13</sup> Numerous semi-independent Hindu rajas lived in the northern Deccan, feudatories of the Muslim sultans of Ahmadnagar, Khandesh and Berar. One of these rajas was most likely the patron of the *ragamala* paintings.

Even after the great Persianate schools of painting developed at the Deccani capitals in the late sixteenth century, provincial painting for Hindu rajas continued, particularly in the northern Deccan where influences from Rajasthan and Malwa were strong. Some of the patrons may have been Rajasthani noblemen, serving as officers in the Mughal army, for



29. *Dhanasri Ragini*  
Northern Deccan,  
late sixteenth century  
22.1 × 17.4 cm  
Bikaner Palace Collection

30. *Kamghodi Ragini*  
Northern Deccan,  
late sixteenth century  
23.2 × 17.9 cm  
Bikaner Palace Collection



31. *Prince and ladies in a garden house*  
Northern Deccan,  
late sixteenth century  
Private collection







the fort of Ahmadanagar and much of the northern Deccan fell into Mughal hands in 1600. The capital of the Mughal Deccan was thereafter Aurangabad, a city just north of Ahmadnagar. Burhanpur, further north again, almost on the border of Malwa, was also an important Mughal centre. From these two cities, Mughal armies harassed the independent kingdoms of Bijapur and Golconda throughout the seventeenth century until they too were conquered in 1686 and 1687, by Aurangzeb.

The presence of Rajput noblemen in the northern Deccan may have produced an important school of Hindu painting at Aurangabad. A dispersed *ragamala* set found at Ghanerao, a *thikana* of Jodhpur, in Rajasthan (32-33), and a *Gita govinda*, painted in a similar style, are the chief examples of the school.<sup>14</sup> Both series were thought to have been executed somewhere in Rajasthan (at Nagaur, or in Mewar) until the discovery of an illustrated *Rasamanjari*, in a coarser version of the same style, which contains a colophon stating that it was painted at Aurangabad in 1650 for a Mewar thakur.<sup>15</sup> The style combines the boldness of Rajput painting with a strong, somewhat melancholy Deccani palette of blue, pink and mauve. Recently, tiny paintings of women standing alone, in the same style, have come to



32. (OPPOSITE) *Lalita Ragini*  
Northern Deccan, c. 1650  
16.8 × 19 cm  
Private collection

33. (ABOVE) *Krishna enthroned, attended by gopis*  
Northern Deccan, c. 1650  
16.8 × 19 cm  
Private collection



light.<sup>16</sup> They are said to have come from behind the small glass panels of a *shish mahal* at Ghanerao, suggesting that the 'Aurangabad school' was basically a Rajput idiom, transplanted to the south either temporarily or permanently, its Deccani palette a result of the locally available pigments.

At Burhanpur, a school of painting may have developed in the mid seventeenth century which combined Deccani extravagance with the strong areas of warm colour typical of Malwa paintings. A single *ragamala* set, now dispersed, in this curious hybrid style has come to light; one page from it, painted in tones of pink, grey, blue, orange and black, is in the Musée Guimet, Paris (34).<sup>17</sup>



34. *Kakubha Ragini*  
Burhanpur (?), mid  
seventeenth century  
22 x 13.5 cm  
Musée Guimet,  
Paris, M.A. 3573

मानं चुर  
नयोव देते ॥२२॥  
वर्गोरो जेम लोचने का ॥  
रामा राम मु हात प्रनासे धि  
नामि वेष्टो न नि तो प्र दि ॥ ६ ॥  
अह कला करे कला ति व  
सर्न कार बो ह वै ऊप म उ  
क मु ता ता रे का मो र प रि कै  
त्रि ता व धा ॥  
रमा  
का को ते नि  
कै व श्म ॥ ६ ॥  
वन का रि षे ६ ॥  
न ॥ त की न का म पु



111. Peacock in a rainstorm at night  
Northern Deccan, late sixteenth century  
15.5 x 19cm  
Private collection  
See p. 40 and black and white illustration 24





परीश्रवणवर्तमानाक्रुकोकिठनादहृष्ट॥शामामधुस्वादनघूर्णनेजागो  
 मुक्ताकिठकोहृष्टन॥१॥नरुणारुणसंकशयसनाविजककुका॥सहकारव  
 रस्यानःक्रीडतीस्वसखीयुना॥५॥



iv Gauri Ragini  
 Northern Deccan, late sixteenth century  
 24.7 × 19cm  
 Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego  
 See p. 40 and black and white illustration 25



साकदा नानव नयल तालिगता नोवनातः कात्रमी रा रमप्रकाटितरय विने नमिदे  
 तिरम्ये ॥ कात्रमी रैदुव नर स मु लि क रा गान रा ले का ड यु च मे द न क ल या लि गित ४२  
 वसन ३ ॥ १ ॥ मलय ज मे ग ना डि डा व स प्र ण र न प्र कर र ये त ४ गो ड त भार डि रा रा व ॥ ह द य  
 हि क भा वा र्ज न से को मु का मि यु व ति भि रि व सी डी मि य मा नो व स ना ॥ १ ॥ क ल क ल क ल गी ति दे वा य  
 नो म भु र र सि का लि को म स स य म न ॥ म द ह द ल ता ना य न या ने स म ता ल ग न न द ला से ल मा वी ज  
 मा न ॥ ३ ॥ आ नो सा मा ऊ र स गि फ णि प ल व सी नि क ॥ अ र णा थु क स र ग र द वा य स म प्र ३ ॥ ४ ॥ १ ॥



V. Hindola Raga  
 Northern Deccan, late sixteenth century  
 23.8 x 18.3 cm  
 National Museum of India, New Delhi  
 See p. 40 and black and white illustration 26





vi. *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II*  
Attributed here to the Bikaner painter  
Bijapur, c.1590  
26.5 x 16.5cm  
Private collection  
See p. 73 and black and white illustration 49

Five folios from a *ragamala* set, formerly in the Khajanchi Collection, Bikaner, were probably painted in the Deccan in the second half of the seventeenth century under strong Mewar influence.<sup>18</sup> They are now divided between the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares (35) and the National Museum of India, New Delhi. The striking sense of pattern, tangled clouds and cool palette of blue, green and mauve are Deccani, though the conventions for the foliage are from Rajasthan.

A splendid *Gujari Ragini*, in a private collection, is an extraordinary clash of brilliant colour (36).<sup>19</sup> The *ragini*, dressed in bright yellow, sits on a white lotus against a pure

35. *Madhumadhavi Ragini* ✓  
Northern Deccan, second  
half seventeenth century  
25.3 × 16.5 cm  
Bharat Kala Bhavan,  
Benares







36. *Gujari Ragini*  
Northern Deccan, second half  
seventeenth century  
21 × 13 cm  
Private collection

cinnabar-red background. The delicate blue arabesque of the border, also on a red ground, suggests a mid seventeenth-century Bundi or Kota connection. Other pages from this dispersed *ragamala* set are in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay (37),<sup>20</sup> and the Agha Hyder Hassan Collection, Hyderabad.<sup>21</sup>

Closely related is an elegant *Sarangi Ragini*, in the Mittal Museum, Hyderabad, probably executed somewhere in the Aurangabad area (38).<sup>22</sup> Its palette of bluish grey, mauve, green and white is similar to that of *Madhumadhavi Ragini*, in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, which has the same tangled clouds. *Kakubha Ragini*, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, may be from the same set (39).<sup>23</sup>

The same artist, or a related hand, produced a complete copy of the late sixteenth-century *ragamala* set from the northern Deccan, with which we began this chapter, sometime during the second half of the seventeenth century (40–42).<sup>24</sup> It has been suggested that this later group, of which seven pages survive, is a late eighteenth-century version of the earlier

37. (RIGHT) *Prince listening to a singer*  
 Northern Deccan, second half seventeenth century  
 19 × 12.2 cm  
 Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, 43.37

38. (BELOW, LEFT) *Sarangi Ragini*  
 Northern Deccan, second half seventeenth century  
 Mittal Museum, Hyderabad

39. (BELOW, RIGHT) *Kakubha Ragini*  
 Northern Deccan, second half seventeenth century  
 Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, 43.21





40. (ABOVE, LEFT) *Trivani Ragini*  
Northern Deccan, second half seventeenth century  
25 × 17.5 cm  
Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares

41. (ABOVE, RIGHT) *Varari Ragini*  
Northern Deccan, second half seventeenth century  
24.2 × 17.3 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, i.s. 49–1959



42. (LEFT) *Hindola Raga*  
Northern Deccan, second half seventeenth century  
25 × 17.5 cm  
Bashir Mohamed Ltd, London



*ragamala*, or that the faces were repainted in Delhi during the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century <sup>25</sup> However, its style fits into developments in painting at Aurangabad before 1700. Faces are very similar to *Sarangi Ragini* (38), and the palette of greyish blue, mauve and yellow is also related. Furthermore, there is no evidence of repainting on the faces.

*Hindola Raga* (42) which has recently come to light, is the only page of the later set which faithfully copies – down to the last detail – one of the surviving masterpieces of the earlier group (26 and col. pl. v). The fact that the later set is in a northern Deccani idiom of the second half of the seventeenth century implies that at that date the earlier set was already in the Aurangabad vicinity and reinforces the probability of a northern Deccani provenance for it.

## NOTES

1. Goetz (1950), pp. 101–3; Barrett (1958), p. 12; Ebeling, pp. 155–58.
2. Private collection. Previously unpublished.
3. Binney Collection. Welch (1973), no. 75; Binney (1973), no. 118.
4. Gray (1950), pl. 142; Barrett (1958), pl. 4; Barrett and Gray, p. 118.
5. Khandalavala, Chandra and Chandra, fig. 113; Barrett and Gray, p. 119.
6. Gray (1950), pl. 143; Barrett (1958), pl. 3.
7. Goetz (1950), pl. 4; W. G. Archer (1960), pl. 14.
8. Goetz (1950), pl. 2.
9. Private collection. Previously unpublished.
10. Goetz (1944).
11. See pp. 17–19, pls 1–2, col. pl. 1.
12. See pp. 67–73.
13. Skelton (1959).
14. Chandra (1957), pl. 7, Welch and Beach, no. 18; Binney (1973), no. 130.
15. Doshi, pp. 19–28.
16. Unpublished.
17. I am grateful to Jagdish Mittal for suggesting Burhanpur as a provenance.
18. Khandalavala, Chandra and Chandra, fig. 115, col. pl. c.
19. Mittal (1963), p. 21.
20. 43.47. Gray (1950), pl. 148.
21. Brown, fig. 1.
22. Mittal (1963), p. 21.
23. 43.21. Ibid., p. 22.
24. Ebeling, pp. 155–58.
25. Archer, W. G. (1960), pl. 13.

# Sultan Ali Adil Shah I

## Bijapuri (1557–79)

**N**O PAINTINGS have yet emerged which can be attributed to Bijapur before the reign of Ali Adil Shah I. The only reference to an earlier phase of Bijapuri art is by the historian Firishta, in his account of the second Adil Shahi sultan, Ismail (1509–34):

He was an adept in the arts of painting, varnishing, making arrows and embroidering saddle-cloths. In music and poetry he excelled most of his age. He was fond of the company of learned men and poets, numbers of whom he munificently supported at his court . . . He was fonder of the Turkish and Persian manners, music and language, than the Deccany: he seldom made use of the latter tongue. This partialty was owing to his being educated under the tuition of his aunt Dilshad Agha, who by the desire of his father kept him as much as possible from the company of the Deccanis, so that he had little relish for that people.<sup>1</sup>

It is significant that although Shism and Persian manners were already established from the reign of the first sultan, Yusuf (1489–1509), Ismail went to unusual lengths to encourage foreign customs and to discourage Deccani culture. When Shah Ismail of Iran sent an ambassador to visit several Indian kingdoms, Bijapur received him with singular kindness. In recognition, the shah sent presents, addressing his namesake at Bijapur as ‘shah’ (1519). From then on, the sultans of Bijapur considered themselves superior to other Indian kings, especially to their rivals, the sultans of Ahmadnagar, who had received the royal title from the kings of Gujerat. Ismail was so taken with the Safavids, that he ordered his army officers to wear scarlet caps with twelve points, the distinguishing Shia headdress of Iran, and inserted the name of the Safavid emperor in the Friday prayers (*khutba*), to be recited in mosques throughout the land.<sup>2</sup>

Ismail had ruled from the age of thirteen under a Deccani regent, who had attempted – unsuccessfully – to depose him. The regent was eventually assassinated, an incident which sharpened the dangerous rift between foreign Muslims (Persians, Arabs and Turks) and the ‘natives’ or ‘Deccanis’ (who were allied to the powerful clique of African émigrés). The former were often Shia, the latter invariably Sunni. Ismail then inaugurated a strict anti-Decanni policy:

During his confinement, the king had vowed not to enlist any Deccanis or Abyssinians in his service, and he kept his word for nearly twelve years, maintaining no other troops but

foreigners, till at length, at their request, he permitted the children of foreigners born in India, to be received into the army, and afterwards, by degrees, consented to enroll Afghans and Rajpoots, provided they were not natives of the Deccan; a practice which was rigidly adhered to at the Adil Shahy court, till the reign of Ibrahim Adil Shah II.<sup>3</sup>

This strange policy naturally set the Islamic culture of the Deccan on a precarious basis, discouraging any connection with indigenous traditions. Ismail's passion for everything foreign, however, strongly suggests that he patronized miniature painters, for illustrated books were the natural possessions of an Iranian prince.

Ismail's son Ibrahim I reversed his father's measures. He was a Sunni, forbade the Shia cap, enlisted Deccanis in his service and permitted only four hundred foreigners to remain in his bodyguard. He even abolished Persian as court language so that, 'the public accounts formerly kept in Persian, were now written in Hindvy, under the management of Brahmins who soon acquired great influence in his government' <sup>4</sup> This rejection of Iranian culture may have interrupted the patronage of miniature painting.

Bijapur's cultural identity see-sawed again on the succession of Ibrahim's son, Ali I (1557-79), who became even more fanatically Shia than his grandfather. He refused to tolerate Sunnis among the nobility. Firishta, our customary informant, does not mention painting and is, in fact, unusually silent about Ali I. He possibly found much to censure in the sultan's character, but since his patron was Ali's nephew and successor, Ibrahim II, he may have thought it prudent to give only the basic facts of the reign with little further comment. Ali was, in fact, much enamoured by the young pages of his court and failed to produce an heir. Tragedy eventually befell him. He demanded from the sultan of Bidar 'eunuchs' of matchless beauty who, shortly after their arrival in 1579, murdered him.<sup>5</sup>

The only mention of Ali's patronage of the arts is in Rafi ud din Shirazi's *Tadhkirat al mulk*, an account of Bijapur from its origins to 1612. The author, a Persian who came to Bijapur during the reign of Ibrahim II, says that Ali I,

had a great inclination towards the study of books and he had procured many books connected with every kind of knowledge, so that a coloured library had become full. Nearly sixty men, calligraphers, gilders of books, book binders, and illuminators were busy doing their work the whole day in the library.<sup>6</sup>

The reference to a 'coloured library' and 'illuminators' (miniature painters or margin decorators?) are vague and open to several interpretations. Strangely enough, the man in charge of this vast library was a Hindu with a local Maratha name, Shesh Waman Pandit.

Very few paintings can be attributed to Ali's reign. The most important are in a manuscript entitled the *Nujum al ulum*, or *Stars of science*, in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.<sup>7</sup> The book is a compilation of facts on astronomy, magic, animals and weapons. The illustrations number 876. Some of them occupy a full page, others are only marginal decorations. Their subjects follow the themes of the chapters they illustrate:

1. Illustrated folios 16b - 174b. Scenes of the heavens, angels, the signs of the zodiac, talismans, sorcerers, the invocation of spirits within magic circles.
2. Illustrated folios 191a - 231b. Magic diagrams.
3. Illustrated folios 232a - 233b. Processions.
4. Illustrated folios 240b - 313a. Demonesses: some are terrifying, feeding on human beings; others resemble Hindu deities.





43. A page from the *Nujum al ulum*  
Bijapur, dated 1570  
25.8 × 16 cm (folio)  
Chester Beatty Library, Dublin



44. A page from the *Nujum al ulum*  
Bijapur, dated 1570  
25.8 × 16 cm (folio)  
Chester Beatty Library, Dublin

5. Illustrated folios 313b–337a. Animals.
6. Illustrated folios 337b–349. Weaponry: weapons and duelling were a passion among young Muslims at Bijapur and Ahmadnagar, a custom deplored by Firishhta.<sup>8</sup>

The manuscript is one of the few dated landmarks of Deccani painting. The date 978 AH/1570–71 AD appears twice in the text as well as in a simplified colophon on the last page.<sup>9</sup> The note by a former owner within the text, stating that the manuscript was in the library of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II of Bijapur (1579–1627), suggests a Bijapuri origin.

The illustrations are a virtual compendium of motifs found in Deccani painting during the next century. Nevertheless, affinities with Mughal painting of the late 1560s show that by 1570 the innovations of the Mughal school had already begun to influence Deccani centres. The artists' way of suggesting the body's mass and movement owes much to early Akbari illustrated manuscripts, especially in the depiction of male figures (43). Women (44) conform to a more southern canon of beauty, tall and majestic as in the *Tarif-i husain shahi*, painted five years before at Ahmadnagar (1–2 and col. pl. 1).

Another manuscript, on music and dance, entitled the *Javahir al musikat*, in the collection of the British Library, may also be from Ali's reign (45).<sup>10</sup> Fragmentary, ending abruptly on fol. 214, it contains forty-eight paintings in a crude but lively version of the *Nujum* style. The language of the text is Deccani Urdu, written in clumsy *nastaliq*. The ink has been applied with a thick brush and the paper is coarse and brown. Despite the stylistic relationship to the

45. A page from the *Javahir al musikat-i muhammadi*  
Bijapur, c. 1570  
15.7 × 10 cm (folio)  
British Library, London, Or. 12857





*Nujum*, there is a perplexing note on fol. 4a, stating that the patron of the manuscript was Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah (1627–56). Given the sixteenth-century style of the paintings, this would seem to have been added later, perhaps when the book entered the royal Bijapur library. If, however, a late dating is eventually established, then it would prove that the *Nujum* style continued well into the seventeenth century.

The *Nujum* and the *Javahir* share many characteristics. There is a common palette, with a preference for bright orange, moss-green, brownish red and a brilliant royal blue, colours frequently used in later Bijapuri painting as well. Certain thematic 'blocks' also correspond. In particular, the third section of the *Javahir*, containing single female figures (dancers?) posed in arched niches, resembles the fourth section of the *Nujum* which depicts demonesses and earth spirits, also in niches. Several of these figures bear a relation to the iconography of Hindu deities and the *ragamala* of later Hindu painting.

A second musical manuscript, a Marathi commentary on Sarangadeva's *Sangita-ratnakara*, in the collection of the City Palace Museum, Jaipur, contains four miniatures, closely related to both the *Nujum* and the *Javahir*.<sup>11</sup> Two artists painted two illustrations each. The more talented painter, responsible for scenes depicting a prince watching dance performances, worked in a rapid, sketchy manner that brilliantly captures the excited rhythms of dancers and spectators (46–47). He may have worked on the *Nujum* and the *Javahir* as well.



Once again, a puzzling inscription raises problems of dating. It states that the commentary was commissioned by Kishan Singh, the son of the maharaja of Amber, who was then in Mughal service in the Deccan, and written by the scribe Nur Khan in 1679 at Jaisinghpura (modern Aurangabad). If the inscription is not spurious, we are left with the possibility either that the book is much later than it seems, or that its paintings were excised from a Bijapuri manuscript of Ali's reign and re-used in a later work.

Only one other painting is connected with Ali Adil Shah's reign. It is a portrait of Ali himself, dressed in a gold brocaded shawl over a white muslin *jama* (48).<sup>12</sup> Although his face and costume are close to the *Nujum* figures, the formality of his pose resembles Golconda work of the seventeenth century. If the portrait is a later version, the artist must have copied a Bijapuri original of c. 1570.

46. (OPPOSITE, LEFT)  
A page from the *Rasapradipa tika*  
Bijapur, c. 1570  
City Palace Museum, Jaipur

47. (OPPOSITE, RIGHT)  
A page from the *Rasapradipa tika*  
Bijapur, c. 1570  
City Palace Museum, Jaipur

48 (RIGHT) *Sultan Ali Adil Shah*;  
Possibly Golconda,  
seventeenth century, after  
a lost Bijapur original, c. 1570  
Bashir Mohamed Ltd, London



Inscriptions on both sides of the page tantalize us with myriad bits of information. The painting has been laid down 'on an album leaf with seven lines of script excised from a document dated 961AH/1553AD'.<sup>12</sup> The illegible inscriptions in the upper right and left-hand corners of the painting have been obscured with white paint. A third Persian inscription on the right-hand margin reads: 'Portrait of Ali Adil Khan Deccani'. The use of the derogatory title 'adil khan' rather than the Deccani 'adil shah' suggests a Mughal hand, and, in fact, the handwriting resembles autographs of the Mughal emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan. The inscription on the scroll which Ali holds is a complicated example of late Persian verse in the 'Indian' style. It praises the sultan, and its last three words *khatt-i ajib ali* ('the line of [work of] Ajib Ali') may be the signature of the calligrapher who copied the verse on the scroll.

## NOTES

1. Firishta, pp. 43-44.
2. Ibid., pp. 27-28.
3. Ibid., pp. 47-48.
4. Ibid., p. 70.
5. Haig (1965), p. 458.
6. Joshi (1955), p. 97.
7. Arnold and Wilkinson, pls 3-5. One page, which has become separated from the manuscript, is in the Binney Collection: Welch (1973), no. 74; Binney (1973), no. 117.
8. Firishta, pp. 127-28.
9. The colophon mentions neither the scribe nor the patron of the manuscript.
10. Or. 12857. See Ebeling, p. 176, where the manuscript is mistakenly attributed to Jaunpur on the basis of the author's patronymic 'al Jaunpuri'. It is described in the *British Museum list of oriental manuscripts 1948-1964* (Or. 11820-12898) as a 'work on the Indian musical modes [*ragas*] and the mystical experiences brought on by listening to music by Shaikh Abd al Karim ibn Shaikh Farid-i Ansari al Kadiri al Jaunpuri. There are forty-eight miniatures which fall into three categories, illustrating a, the *svaras* (notes) b, the *ragas* and *raginis* and c, certain dance movements associated with particular *ragas*'. I am grateful to Norah Titley and Jerry Losty, British Library, for bringing the manuscript to my attention. See also: Titley (1977), pp. 1-2, fig. 1.
11. 6790/1. Das (1977), figs 7-8. I am indebted to Asok Das for discussing this manuscript with me and providing photographs of it.
12. Sotheby's, London, 7 July 1975, lot 85.

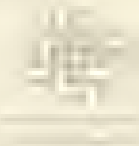
## Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II Bijapuri (1579–1627), patron of the arts

**I**BRAHIM ADIL SHAH II was the greatest patron of the arts the Deccan produced. Passionately fond of painting, music and poetry, he caused sweeping changes to occur in Deccani painting just as the Mughal emperor Akbar transformed Mughal art. When he assumed full power at the age of twenty, after chafing under tyrannical regents for nearly eleven years, Bijapuri painting suddenly erupted, brilliantly mature, from the provincial style of the preceding reign. Although always retaining an earthy wildness, the finest Bijapuri works from this point onwards fully equal the most splendid Mughal and Safavid paintings, both in expressive power and technical achievement.

Clever, though far from brilliant, on the battlefield, Ibrahim's real talent lay in his ability to draw out works of genius from the poets and painters of his court. Perhaps his artists intuitively responded to his sensitivity to real feats of genius, whether in literature, music or painting. Apt to be so overcome with emotion while listening to music that he would fall into a trance and lose his power of speech, Ibrahim was a true mystic, like Akbar. Like Akbar, he was also fascinated by Hinduism. In all but one of the portraits of Ibrahim which have survived, he is shown wearing a necklace of *rudraksha* beads, the dried berries which were worn by Hindu holymen.

After the fall of Ahmadnagar fort to the Mughals in 1600, both Bijapur and Golconda recognized the need to placate Akbar. Ibrahim reluctantly consented to give his daughter in marriage to Akbar's son, Daniyal, in 1601, but he delayed sending her. Akbar ordered the Persian émigré Asad Beg to Bijapur in 1603 to escort her to the Mughal court as quickly as possible. As Asad Beg had a literary bent, his memoirs uncover much interesting information about Ibrahim.<sup>1</sup>

First of all, Ibrahim tried to bribe Asad to leave the kingdom, but the Persian would not accept. Finally, Ibrahim consented to meet him and to hear the *farman* sent by Akbar. Ibrahim had trouble understanding its language and, lapsing into Marathi which seems to have been his mother tongue, sought an explanation from his adviser, the Hindu Antu Pandit. After the reading of the *farman*, Asad and Ibrahim had a private conversation: 'I [Asad] impressed upon him the full message of His Majesty. He understood Persian very well, but could not speak it and, if at all, broken'. Ibrahim's reliance upon the local Hindu language, as opposed to Persian or Turkish which were spoken at the Mughal court, suggests that, despite strife at Bijapur between 'natives' and 'foreigners', its Islamic culture had grown roots in a way which had not yet happened in the north. Much of the best Deccani





literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was written in the vernacular, Deccani Urdu, nearly two centuries before Urdu replaced Persian as a literary language in northern India.

Ibrahim addressed Asad as *guru bhai*, implying that both were disciples of Akbar in his new syncretic faith, the *din-i ilahi*. Ibrahim's mysticism is evident from his intense interest in Akbar's religious innovations. It is also revealed by his behaviour during the musical party he arranged for Asad Beg. He was so overwhelmed by the music that he could barely speak and replied to Asad's questions with difficulty.

After staying a month (26 December 1603 – 24 January 1604), Asad was given permission to leave, and he was able to persuade Ibrahim to send his favourite elephant Chanchal to Akbar, as had been planned. Ten 'maunds' of gold ornaments were prepared for the elephant in ten days. Although other gifts are not mentioned, we can assume that many precious objects including manuscripts and paintings were sent. Already in 1601, as part of the initial arrangements worked out for the marriage, two thousand volumes from the royal Bijapur library had been presented to Akbar's representatives. It is specifically stated that many of these books contained paintings which were 'entirely the work of masters'.<sup>2</sup>

The first decade of the seventeenth century must therefore have been a high point in artistic cross-fertilization between the Deccan and the Mughal court. Deccani paintings probably intrigued and pleased both Akbar and Jahangir, accustomed to the realism and restraint of Mughal art, for at least two Mughal painters – Muhammad Ali and Farrukh Beg – painted in a pseudo-Deccani style.<sup>3</sup> Their work generally avoids the narrative themes and naturalistic manner of mainstream Mughal art.

Contemporary Deccani accounts also shed light upon Ibrahim's important rôle as a patron of the arts. The most revealing are three Persian essays by Zuhuri, Ibrahim's poet laureate, and the *Kitab-i nauras*, a collection of songs which Ibrahim himself wrote in Deccani Urdu.

Part of the wave of Iranian painters and writers who were forced to emigrate to India in search of patrons, Zuhuri arrived in the Deccan from the court of Shah Abbas in 988 AH/1580–81 AD. At first he worked at Ahmadnagar where he wrote for the sultans Murtaza I (1565–88), Husain II (1588) and Burhan Nizam Shah II (1591–95). During the ensuing civil wars and Mughal invasion, Zuhuri, like so many other cultivated Persians, left Ahmadnagar for Bijapur.<sup>4</sup> His major work there was the *Sch nasr* (*The three essays*), a trilogy composed of the *Nauras* (a Persian preface to the sultan's Urdu work of the same name), the *Gulzar-i ibrahim* (*The rose garden of Abraham*) and the *Khan-i khalil* (*The table of the friend of God*).<sup>5</sup> The first two praise the sultan's character and accomplishments, while the third gives valuable information about his courtiers.

The *Nauras* describes Ibrahim as a skilled musician, painter and calligrapher, and a tireless patron of the arts, seeking artists from all over the world:

No thorn in the path of Art ever pierced a man's foot but he picked up gardens of flowers . . . from . . . [Ibrahim's] favour . . . and no one tasted . . . toil in the acquisition of perfection, but had Egypt's of sugar cast into his throat by the sweetness of his munificence, and in nothing was the excellence of Art hidden but his discernment openly fell in love with it.<sup>6</sup>

This preface [to the *Kitab-i nauras*] is an open letter by Zuhuri to the denizens . . . of the globe, that they may on every side . . . know the place of Ibrahim to be their centre, and

should not, through negligence, make themselves deprived . . . of his patronage . . . In his love leave your native land and do not remain in exile at home . . .<sup>7</sup>

Zuhuri explains the word *nauras* which fascinated Ibrahim throughout his life:

The reason why the book is called by this name is that the Indians call a mixture of nine juices 'nauras', [according to traditional Indian aesthetics one or more of these nine essences or emotions is present in every work of art and determines its character] and if the Persians believe it to be the fresh fruit of the tree of his learning . . . it is appropriate; and in this sense also that this beloved of perfect beauty [Ibrahim] has newly appeared on the stage of existence from behind the curtain of invisibility . . . [*nauras* in Persian means 'newly arrived, fresh, tender'.]<sup>8</sup>

The *Gulzar-i ibrahim* enumerates Ibrahim's virtues, which, like the *nauras*, were nine. Ibrahim is identified with the Qoranic prophet Abraham (*ibrahim* in Arabic) whose cognomen *khalil* means 'the friend' (of God). Islamic literature contains numerous references to the story of Abraham, who was cast into the fire by Nimrod but by a miracle transformed it into a flower garden. Thus, by writing his book, Ibrahim has produced a perfumed garden from adversity, just as Abraham gathered roses from the fire.<sup>9</sup>

The *Khan-i khalil* explains that just as Abraham served at the table of the friendship of God, Zuhuri will describe some of the servants (courtiers) at the table (court) of Ibrahim. Before doing so, Zuhuri again enumerates the sultan's talents:

In the art of painting he excels the painter . . . While placing the looking glass before him he paints his own picture . . . He is also an expert calligraphist.<sup>10</sup>

But music is by far his first love:

Despite all these excellences . . . he treats . . . [them] as the effect and music as the cause . . . the messengers of [the king] roam about . . . the world . . . with [purses] . . . round their waists . . . in search of the skilled professionals . . . And in Nauraspur [a suburb of Bijapur], a building has been newly erected and furnished for the residence . . . of the expert musicians . . . and with the tumult . . . of the players . . . the trees have set up such a dance . . . The world is saturated with melody . . .<sup>11</sup>

Zuhuri then lists Ibrahim's six courtiers, all extraordinary men in their respective fields: the chief minister, Shah Nawaz Khan, who was a great mathematician, the poet, Malik Qumi, the calligrapher, Hazrat Shah Khalilullah, the painter, Farrukh Husain, Khuddam Mullah Haidar Zehri, a great wit, and Zuhuri. Unfortunately he tells us nothing specific about the style or subject matter of Farrukh Husain's paintings, but his description glows with enthusiasm:

The fourth [courtier] is Maulana Farrukh Husain' than whose painting nothing better can be imagined. The expert painters take pride in being his pupils, and having adopted the outline of his plain sketch as their model put their lives under obligation. From the sight of his black pen the green haired (the beautiful) have learnt wiles. The freshness of his painting has put the portrait of the beautiful to shame, and has thrown it into the whirlpool of . . . jealousy . . . That magical painter has put in motion the breeze which throws aside the veil from the face of the beautiful.<sup>12</sup>

Brief as it is, this passage provides important information. First, since 'expert painters take pride in being his pupils', it is probable that Farrukh Husain was the master painter of the

royal workshop, and that his work influenced other painters there. Therefore, along with genuine works by the master, we can expect to find other paintings imitating his style. Secondly, since other artists 'adopted the outline of his plain sketch as their model', Farrukh may have drawn preliminary outlines to which lesser artists applied colour, just as at the Mughal atelier, the greatest masters drew the outlines of figures and other artists coloured them in. Thirdly, the inclusion of a painter's name among the sultan's favourites proves that the status of some painters in Islamic India was very high indeed. Such prestige, although unusual in Indian history, continued under Ibrahim's successor, Muhammad (1627-56), during whose reign a splendid *darbar* scene was painted commemorating the award of a special honour to one of the sultan's artists (95).

Ibrahim's own book, the *Kitab-i nauras* offers a glimpse of his character and the synthesis which he had brought about between Hinduism and Islam.<sup>13</sup> He was as tolerant as Akbar in religious matters, without the Mughal's messianic drive. In highly Sanskritic language, he sings of his reverence for Hindu deities, the *ragamala*, the heartbreak of separation when he is forced to leave, even for a short time, Atash Khan, his favourite elephant, and his guitar (*tambur*) called Moti Khan, which he loves to play again and again.

He begins his book with an invocation to the goddess of learning, Saraswati, as a Hindu writer would, closely followed by praise of the prophet Muhammad and of the Deccani Muslim saint Gesudaraz, buried at nearby Gulbarga. The most striking example of the Hindu atmosphere of his court is in song fifty-six, in which Ibrahim, a descendant of the Ottoman dynasty of Turkey, describes himself as a Hindu god with attributes and a mount:

In one hand he has a musical instrument, in the other, a book which he reads and sings songs related to the Nauras. He is robed in a saffron-coloured dress, his teeth are black, the nails are . . . red and he loves all. Ibrahim, whose father is god Ganesh and . . . mother, pious Sarasvati, has a rosary of crystal round his neck, a city like Vidyapur [Bijapur] and an elephant as his vehicle.<sup>14</sup>

These vividly descriptive songs should be kept in mind, for they very likely formed the subject matter of painting. The portrait of the sultan in Prague (70 and col. pl. x), for example, corresponds to this self description. Although the elephant vehicle is missing, he is shown holding a musical instrument – almost certainly his *tambur* Moti Khan – with a rosary round his neck, nails painted red and two elephants in the distance. In nearly all other surviving portraits, he appears with a rosary worn as a necklace, with either elephants or a tiny cityscape appearing in the background.

Unfortunately, neither Firishta's account of political events in the Deccan, Zuhuri's poetic praise, nor even the sultan's own songs give much concrete information about Ibrahim's character. He remains a mysterious figure. The precise histories of the Mughal court, which illuminate the personalities of Babur, Akbar and Jahangir, do not exist for the Deccan. All surviving accounts – vague as they are – agree that Ibrahim was an inspired art patron, as well as an excellent painter, calligrapher and musician. Zuhuri reports that he held literary meetings in his library with the scholars of his court; other sources mention that he wrote a treatise on chess, now lost.<sup>15</sup>

It is not unreasonable to infer more. Ibrahim seems to have been intensely sensitive, creative and romantic, as well as probably impetuous, melancholy and somewhat unbalanced. He was the product of a hybrid culture which alternated between Indian cultural values and





vii. *Dervish receiving a visitor*  
 Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
 Bijapur, c.1610-20

26.5 x 19.7cm  
 Bodleian Library, Oxford  
 See p. 78 and black and white illustration 54





VIII. *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II holding castanets*  
 Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
 Bijapur, c.1610–20  
 17 × 10.2cm  
 British Museum, London  
 See p. 81 and black and white illustration 59

rigid adherence to imported concepts from the Islamic Middle East.<sup>16</sup> He may therefore have been rather 'lost' culturally, not really a Muslim or a Hindu, but with an aesthete's attachment to the beauty of both civilizations. He studied Hinduism like a modern seeker of enlightenment and gave himself the Hindu title of *jagatguru*, or world teacher, possibly imitating Akbar's claim to spiritual leadership.

Yet unlike Akbar, he retained a child-like innocence. His songs never mention military conquests. Instead he sings of Hindu deities, Muslim saints, his wife's beauty, his beloved *tambur* or his favourite elephant. The paintings he commissioned have intense colours and flamboyant shapes. Their effect is always poignant, often pensive and melancholy, qualities which must have struck a responsive chord in the sultan's heart. Far less realistic than Mughal paintings and heavily charged with emotion, they suggest that emotion was everything for their patron.

The earliest painting that can be attributed to his reign is of a plump, rosy-checked adolescent wearing a splendid conical turban and a huge emerald necklace (49 and col. pl. vi). Its Deccani origin was first noticed by Soustiel and David who identified the young man as Ibrahim because of his resemblance to the inscribed portrait in Bikaner (50).<sup>17</sup> They dated it c. 1580, twenty years before the usual date given for the Bikaner portrait, because the sultan is beardless, and considered it an accession portrait, the blue background a result of repainting. They translated the inscription on the turban:

- LINE 1    Khadiv of the world, the king of his age  
             Enthroned under an auspicious sign, the fortunate king.  
             Light of the heart and of the eyes of the happy.  
             The benefactor of the soul of the generous.
- LINE 2    He is Khalil.  
             The oystershell of the heavens contains nothing like thee.  
             Faridun and Jam have no son like thee.  
             Solomon . . .

Since their discussion first placed this portrait in its proper context, further information has come to light. The blue background, common in Bijapuri painting, is probably original. The king's face is beardless, but not hairless, and cannot permit a dating of 1580 when he was only nine. His sprouting moustache suggests an age of at least sixteen or older. The painting cannot, therefore, be an accession portrait, but more likely dates from 1590, when the king defeated his tenacious regent and assumed a position of real power, at the age of nineteen.

The elegant *nastaliq* inscription on the turban confirms that the youth is Ibrahim. The poet Zuhuri repeatedly connects Ibrahim with the prophet Abraham, known as *khalil*, 'the friend' (of God). The last book of Zuhuri's trilogy, describing the sultan's courtiers, is entitled *Khan-i khalil*, (*The table of the friend of God*). It is not surprising then that the inscription mentions *khalil*. Moreover, his rosy cheeks and adolescent down remind us of Zuhuri's praise of the king's beauty: the 'fiery glow of the garden of Abraham on the cheeks of the Joseph-countenanced'<sup>18</sup> (literally, 'the sultan, as beautiful as Joseph, has cheeks as red as the fire into which Abraham was cast') and, 'a letter of bondage [has been written] to his newly grown beard'.<sup>19</sup>

The same artist, whom we can call the Bikaner painter, executed the marvellous portrait of Ibrahim out for a walk with his courtiers, in the Bikaner Palace Collection (50).<sup>20</sup> With an





49. *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II*  
Attributed here to the Bikaner painter  
Bijapur, c. 1590

26.5 × 16.5 cm  
Private collection  
See col. pl. VI on p. 54



50. *Procession of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II*  
Attributed here to the Bikaner painter  
Bijapur, c. 1595  
Bikaner Palace Collection



opulence typical of Deccani taste, the figures are overloaded with gold-brocaded robes and heavy jewellery. The stately gait of a royal progress through a garden is brilliantly evoked through the spatially illogical composition. A huge Ibrahim is followed by a swarm of smaller courtiers, buzzing over court intrigues, like chicks following a hen

The inscription on the reverse is in Rajasthani Hindi, written a century after the execution of the painting, and identifies the sultan as Ibrahim. It states that this portrait – like several other Deccani works in this collection – was taken from the fortress of Adoni in the Bijapuri Deccan by Raja Anup Singh, in 1691, and then checked into the royal Bikaner library.<sup>21</sup>

As in the other portrait (49 and col. pl. vi), Ibrahim wears a tall conical turban, his face is heavily shaded and strong colours, vivid blue, deep red, orange and gold, are used. But there are differences. Ibrahim now has a luxuriant beard, hair tumbles out from behind his turban and his necklace is no longer of emeralds but of *rudraksha* beads, the dried berries used as rosaries by Hindu holymen. The factor which separates the two portraits may be Ibrahim's youthful infatuation with Hinduism. In the earlier portrait, he is still a pampered adolescent, while in the Bikaner painting he has become a serious, mystically inclined young man, long haired and disdainful of jewellery. All his portraits from now on show him with a rosary around his neck, just as he describes himself in song fifty-six of the *Kitab-i nauras*.<sup>22</sup>

Considering the rarity of Deccani paintings, it is surprising that so many Mughal works bear a Deccani imprint. Some are by Mughal artists who specialized in exotic neo-Deccani styles, like Farrukh Beg and Muhammad Ali. Others are copies of Deccani originals. Both kinds help to fill gaps in our knowledge of Deccani art.

A painting in the Indian Museum, Calcutta, by a Mughal painter of the 1590s, depicts Ibrahim receiving a document written in Persian from a minister (51).<sup>23</sup> Ibrahim wears his conical turban and rosary necklace, and carries another rosary in his hand. The minister is a dark-skinned Hindu, with Vaishnavite markings on his forehead, possibly Antu Pandit or Rasu Pandit, both prominent Bijapuri noblemen.<sup>24</sup> He has just rushed in and has begun reading the document aloud. Although illegible, it might be a Mughal *farman*. The sultan, looking puzzled and disturbed, continues to say his rosary. The painting is probably a Mughal version of a lost Bijapuri original, possibly by the Bikaner painter.

The *Nimat nama* manuscript, or *Book of dainties*, in the State Museum, Hyderabad, contains recipes for Indian foods and perfumes, in Persian prose and poetry. One of its two miniatures depicts a sultan sitting in a garden surrounded by musical instruments, while servants offer him food and drink (52). The Persian verse which frames the painting in elegant *thuluth* script may be translated:

The master of creation who built this world  
His object was love so he made youth [*nauras*] a symbol.

The sultan, whose face is completely flaked, is undoubtedly Ibrahim. Both Yazdani<sup>25</sup> and Skelton<sup>26</sup> agree on this because the *misra* beneath the portrait contains the word *nauras*, and musical instruments, underlining Ibrahim's passion for music, lie before him. Moreover, some of the figures, wearing Bijapuri turbans and sashes, resemble the noblemen of the Bikaner portrait. An important detail, hitherto unnoticed, the royal figure's huge necklace of *rudraksha* berries, confirms Ibrahim's identity.

The graceful poses, subdued colours, pensive faces and overall mood of restrained dignity differ from the explosive energy of the Bikaner portrait. The transformation from turbulent to restful paintings which occurred in Mughal art just before 1600 was obviously taking place



51. Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II  
receiving a document from a minister  
Mughal copy after a Bijapur  
original, c. 1595  
13.7 × 11.9 cm  
Indian Museum, Calcutta, 553



52. Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II,  
in a manuscript of the *Nimat nama*  
Bijapur, c. 1600–10  
15.8 × 9 cm  
State Museum, Hyderabad



at Bijapur as well. Similarities with the new style of such early seventeenth-century Mughal illustrated books as the *Jog vashisht* of 1602,<sup>27</sup> the *Nafahat al uns*, dated 1603,<sup>28</sup> and the pocket-sized *Divan* of Hafiz, c. 1607–10,<sup>29</sup> suggest a date of c. 1600–10 for the *Nimat nama*.

By 1600, two broad strands had developed within the Bijapuri school. Some artists, more sensitive to Turco-Iranian taste, used the traditional Islamic arabesque and the paradise-garden setting to lyrical effect. Others, like the Bikaner painter and the *Nimat nama* artist, earthier and more Indian, used the idealized human body as a means of expression. The two traditions merge in many paintings during the following decades.

The culmination of the 'Indian' strand is the work of a brilliant artist whom we can call the Bodleian painter, after his portrait of a sufi in the Bodleian Library, Oxford (54 and col. pl. vii).<sup>30</sup> His vision of the dignified human form radiates the inner calm and gentleness which all great Indian art contains, no less in the handful of Ahmadnagar portraits of a few decades earlier (4–5 and col. pl. ii), than in the finest Gupta sculpture. The majestic serenity of his figures is the classical point of Deccani art.

The portrait stuns by its mood of total peace: the saint's piety has plunged his devotees into silent devotion. The sombre tones of the setting suggest the mysteries of the spiritual world, while patches of brilliant colour shimmer like jewels of mystical truths. The sufi has long nails and hair and keeps two pets, a large white parrot in the banyan tree and a monkey on a stand, flaked away in the original, but visible on the extreme left of an eighteenth-century copy executed at Lucknow by Mir Chand, now in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR) (53).<sup>31</sup> The later version identifies the saint as Shah Murad.



53. (LEFT) *Dervish receiving a visitor*  
Signed: 'Mir Chand, son of Ganga Ram'  
Inscribed: *hazrat shah murad*  
Lucknow, eighteenth century  
Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR),  
F.45921, fol. 40

54. (OPPOSITE) *Dervish receiving a visitor*  
Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
Bijapur, c. 1610–20  
26.5 × 19.7 cm  
Bodleian Library, Oxford,  
Ms. Douce Or. b.2(1), fol. 1a  
See col. pl. vii on p. 71





55. (LEFT) *Stout courtier*  
 Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
 Bijapur, c. 1610–20  
 17 × 10 cm  
 British Museum, London, 1937 4–10 03

56. (BELOW) Detail of 55



He must have been famous, for his jungle retreat resembles a shrine, remarkably like this modern description of a Muslim shrine in Pakistan:

... in the middle is a flat, oval elevation made of white cement. This is the spot where the saint used to say his prayers, and it is therefore a hallowed place where visitors love to say their prayers ... in the courtyard to the left of the shrine grows a large fig tree ... in another shrine ... the tree trunk is part of the shrine itself.<sup>13</sup>

A dark-skinned visitor, wearing the white garb of a penitent, with self-inflicted scars on his

forarms, has just given the saint a mango and humbly awaits his blessing. Could this devotee be Ibrahim Adil Shah? With his swarthy skin, pointed beard and hooked nose, he certainly resembles the king. The picture must commemorate an important event, considering its exceptionally large size and lavish use of gold and silver.

The preciousness of the materials seems almost at odds with the subject of the painting. Cows feed from a silver trough and the sheep beneath the shrine has a marvellous shimmering fleece, entirely stippled in gold. The very roots of the giant tree, poking through cracks in the saint's dilapidated platform, are golden. The artist may have been inspired by the saint's message to his visitor that real treasure is found not in palaces but in sufis' dusty retreats.

However, our painter was equally at home portraying palace life. His *Stout courtier* in the British Museum (55)<sup>33</sup> delves into the character of a powerful veteran of the turbulent world of Bijapuri politics. Wearing the finest muslin robes and a Kashmir shawl, he is clearly a man of action; proud, resolute, cynical, but perhaps compassionate as well, to judge from his face (56). As in the Bodleian picture, there is an overpowering sense of stillness, as if our courtier is lost in thought upon newly discovered truths. His hands are folded in the same way as those of the white-garbed penitent, and his brilliant pink and white costume shines against the sombre ground, like the brilliant patches of colour in the larger painting. We also see the same kind of plants, at the bottom of the page, and there is a characteristic zone of shadow around the contours of every shape which conveys the illusion of roundness. The Bodleian painter, who must have executed this portrait during the first quarter of the seventeenth century, has been strongly influenced by Mughal portraits of the reign of Emperor Jahangir (1605-27), which also isolate their subjects against a void; but while objects in Mughal paintings often have a rigid solidity, here textiles and plants sway, as if caressed by a gentle breeze.

The contemplative side of Bijapuri court life is represented by the *Mullah*, also attributable to the Bodleian painter, in the India Office Library, London (57-58).<sup>34</sup> As a member of the *ulama*, or interpreters of the law, he belongs to the orthodox Muslim 'establishment', quite opposed to the wild 'lawless' sufi we saw living in the jungle (54 and col. pl. vii). The mullah holds a splendid, tooled gold Qoran in his right hand and seems lost in lonely meditation, like all the Bodleian painter's figures. This polished portrait has an almost Mughal realism, but its spiritual mood and elegant sweep of line make many Mughal portraits of comparable quality seem stiff.

For sheer poetry, the same artist's portrait of Sultan Ibrahim, in the British Museum, has few equals in Indian art (59 and col. pl. viii).<sup>35</sup> Although not inscribed with the name of the artist or subject, there can be little doubt that the man is a king, for he holds a handkerchief in his right hand, an old Islamic symbol of kingship. The full beard, wide hips, conical turban and necklace of *rudraksha* berries reveal Ibrahim's identity, while castanets in his left hand symbolize his musical talents.<sup>36</sup> Ibrahim's face radiates the gentle mood of reflection characteristic of this artist's work. Here, as in his other paintings, heavily tooled gold textiles sway, as if in a breeze, and dark skin with shaded contours resembles old ivory. The king elegantly extends the small finger of his left hand in the same gesture as the mullah holding the Qoran.

The shape of Ibrahim's nose in this picture has caused disagreement because here it is straight, while in other portraits it is hooked. It seems to me that if the painter's intention had been to depict his subject realistically, as Mughal painters aimed to do, the shape of the nose



57. *Mullah*  
Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
Byapur, c. 1610–20  
15.1 × 7.6 cm  
India Office Library, London, 402

58. Detail of 57





59. *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II holding castanets*  
Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
Bijapur, c. 1610–20  
17 × 10.2 cm  
British Museum, London, 1937 4–10 02  
See col. pl. VIII on p. 72



60. *Kneeling dervish*

Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
Byapur, c. 1610–20  
Gulshan album, Gubstan Palace  
Library, Teheran

would be important. However, the Deccani artist, although intrigued by Mughal realism, always used unrealistic colours and exaggerated forms. In this portrait, the painter resolved to produce a vision of seductive perfection. Fingers are long and elegant, eyes almond shaped, feet are tiny and encased in golden slippers. It is not surprising that, confronted with Ibrahim's large nose, the artist transformed it into a small and dainty one

The portrait of a *Kneeling dervish*, mounted on a page of the Emperor Jahangir's Gulshan album, now in the Gulistan Library, Teheran, can also be attributed to the Bodleian painter (60).<sup>37</sup> Like Ibrahim in the British Museum portrait, the dervish wears a gold-brocaded shawl decorated with geometric motifs and a feathery beard with a thick tuft of hair under his lower lip, and he extends the little finger of his left hand. The richness of his fur-lined coat and huge golden earrings suggests that he was a prominent figure at the Bijapuri court, perhaps Ibrahim's spiritual guide.

The *Fighting cranes*, in the Musée Guimet, may also have been painted by the Bodleian painter (61).<sup>38</sup> The star-like flowers shimmering against a mysteriously dark background, and the thick white paint of the cranes' bodies, now flaking, are characteristic of his work. In the same collection, the large portrait of a falcon wearing a ruby necklace, probably a royal hunter's prized bird, has a similar savage mood (62).<sup>39</sup> Although its dark tonalities and



61. (ABOVE) *Fighting cranes*  
Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
Bijapur, c. 1610-20  
12.5 × 18.3 cm  
Musée Guimet, Paris, M.G. 9150

62. (RIGHT) *Royal falcon*  
Bijapur, c. 1610-20  
23.5 × 16.5 cm  
Musée Guimet, Paris, M.A. 2462





pointillist dabs of pink, green and orange colour, composing vegetation, derive from our painter's style, the slightly wooden pose suggests the hand of a follower.

The dark prince in the Binney Collection is also in the style of the Bodleian painter (63).<sup>40</sup> The subject is unquestionably Ibrahim, given his conical turban, beard and *rudraksha* berry necklace. He resembles the suppliant standing before the sufi in the Bodleian picture (54 and col. pl. vii).

All the paintings which can be attributed to this gifted artist, with the exception of the Bodleian picture, are approximately the same small size, averaging  $17 \times 10$  cm. Originally they may have formed part of a Bijapuri album which contained portraits of the major figures at court.



63. (LEFT) *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II*  
Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
Bijapur, c. 1610–20  
 $18.8 \times 9.7$  cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego

64. (ABOVE) *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II*  
Bijapur, c. 1610–20  
 $10 \times 7.5$  cm  
City Palace Museum, Jaipur, A.G. 753

65. *Poet in a garden*  
Written attribution to  
the Mughal artist  
Muhammad Ali on the  
mount, c. 1620–30, after a  
Bijapur original, c. 1610–20  
12.2 × 10.3 cm  
Museum of Fine Arts,  
Boston, 14.663



A tiny portrait of Ibrahim wearing the Hindu *tilak* on his forehead and a marvellous turban decorated with dancing peacocks, is in the City Palace Museum, Jaipur (64).<sup>41</sup> Although certain conventions, like the stark background and streaky blue and white clouds, remind us of the Bodleian painter's work, this portrait lacks the master's customary insight into his subjects' mood.

As only seven paintings by this remarkable artist have so far emerged, our knowledge of his oeuvre is lamentably incomplete. Fortunately, three pictures exist which are probably copies of lost paintings by him. These paintings – of highly divergent date and provenance – suggest that he was an acclaimed artist during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and that there was a widespread demand among connoisseurs for copies of his work.

The Mughal artist Muhammad Ali, who specialized in a neo-Deccani style for the emperors Jahangir and Shah Jahan, produced a remarkable adaptation of the Bodleian painter's work in the *Poet in a garden*, in the Boston Museum (65).<sup>42</sup> It has the special meditative calm which all the master's paintings contain. The poet extends the little finger of his left hand in the gesture of the Teheran dervish (60) and the British Museum portrait of Ibrahim (59 and col. pl. viii). Masses of plum blossom surge up behind him, suggesting the energy of hidden thoughts, just as, in the Bodleian picture, a banyan tree crowns the figure of the saint (54 and col. pl. vii). Yet Muhammad Ali has certainly toned down the intensity of



x. Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II playing the tambur  
 Attributed here to the Leningrad painter  
 Bijapur, c.1595-1600  
 14 × 14.8cm  
 Naprstek Museum, Prague  
 See p. 95 and black and white illustration 70



the eighteenth-century Lucknow artist, Mir Kalan Khan, contains a remarkable depiction of Bijapuri palace architecture.

The *Crouching dervish* in the Metropolitan Museum can be attributed to another artist working at Bijapur (68).<sup>45</sup> Less interested in the expressive potential of the human face and body than the Bodleian painter – and therefore less Indian in spirit – he uses, instead, tight abstract forms and the traditional Islamic arabesque. Our eye is drawn to the curls of the dervish's mantle and the interlocking pattern of his legs and arms, as if spiritual treasure were held within. He is probably a *qalandar*, one of those wandering holymen who shave their

67. *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II* ~  
with attendants  
Golconda (?), second half  
seventeenth century (?), after a lost  
Bijapur original, c. 1610–20  
24.7 × 18 cm  
Earl of Harrowby Collection





68. (LEFT) *Crouching dervish*  
Bijapur, c. 1620–30  
21.9 × 14.8 cm  
Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
New York, 1957, 57.51.30  
Bequest of Cora Timken Burnett

69. (OPPOSITE) *Sultan Ibrahim  
Adil Shah II hawking*  
Attributed here to the  
Leningrad painter  
Bijapur, c. 1590  
28.7 × 15.6 cm  
Institute of the Peoples of Asia,  
Academy of Sciences, Leningrad,  
Leningrad album, fol. 2  
See col. pl. 1x on p. 89

heads, wear pelts, behave with wild abandon and break society's rules in order 'to draw people's contempt upon themselves by outwardly blameworthy actions'.<sup>46</sup>

Although the painting has been attributed, at various times, to Iran, Central Asia and Turkey,<sup>47</sup> it is almost certainly a Bijapuri version of the crouching demons and holymen of earlier Islamic art, as in the *Fateh* albums in Istanbul.<sup>48</sup> The chocolate-brown background, the sufi's greyish complexion, the salmon tones of the sheepskin lining, and the excessively thick application of paint, now crackled like porcelain, are typical of Bijapur, while the grainy patterns on the wooden staff and bowl are common to both Bijapur and Golconda.

The most poetic Bijapuri portrait to have survived is undoubtedly *Ibrahim Adil Shah II hawking*, from the 'Leningrad album', in the Institute of the Peoples of Asia, Leningrad (69 and col. pl. 1x).<sup>49</sup> This artist, whom we can call the Leningrad painter, rivalled – and perhaps surpassed – the accomplishments of the Bodleian painter (54 and col. pl. vii). He worked in a more Islamic mode and was particularly partial to gold arabesque, sweeping calligraphic





contours and paradisaical settings. He may be Farrukh Husain, who, as we know from Zuhuri's *Khan-i khalil*, was thought to be the greatest painter in Ibrahim's employ.<sup>50</sup> Unfortunately this identification is far from certain. The painting bears a rather badly written attribution to 'Farrukh' on its eighteenth-century mount. Two drawings of elephants, feeble versions of this portrait's style, are the only other related pictures which bear inscribed attributions to Farrukh Husain (76–77).<sup>51</sup>

The Leningrad portrait is probably this artist's earliest surviving work. It is inscribed in Persian in the upper right-hand corner, *taswir-i khaqan-i azam ibrahim adil shah* ('portrait of the Emperor Ibrahim Adil Shah'). The elegant *nastaliq* script and the Deccani titles of 'emperor' and 'shah' instead of the derogatory Mughal title 'adil khan', suggest that the



70. Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II playing the tambur  
Attributed here to the Leningrad painter  
Bijapur, c. 1595–1600

14 × 14.8 cm  
Naprstek Museum, Prague, A 12182  
See col. pl. x on p. 90

inscription is Bijapuri, and therefore reliable. Ibrahim could have been identified even without the inscription, for he is clearly the same man as in the portrait bust (49 and col. pl. vi) and the Bikaner procession (50), with pursed red lips, hooked nose and a necklace of dried berries. Since he has not yet grown a beard, this picture may date from as early as c. 1590, when he was nineteen.

Pensive and majestic, Ibrahim rides a hennaed horse through an enchanted world. Swaying trees and flowers provide a gentle fanfare of melancholy splendour, suited to his passionate temperament. Foliage is composed of iridescent dabs of paint. Fantastic lilac rocks swarm with hidden shapes and faces, invigorated by an animism that had disappeared from religion but not from art. The picture's cool extravagance derives from Iranian painting of the reign of Shah Tahmasp (1524-76), which in turn owes much to fifteenth-century Turkman art at Tabriz.<sup>52</sup>

The next surviving painting of this artist's career is probably the portrait of Ibrahim in the Naprstek Museum, Prague (70 and col. pl. x).<sup>53</sup> As he has now grown a beard and moustache, the painting must be slightly later, perhaps c. 1595-1600. While the sultan plays his beloved *tambur*, which he calls *Moti Khan* in the *Kitab-i nauras*, three singers accompany him, clapping their hands in time with his playing.

Similarities with the Leningrad portrait abound. The bold, sharp curves of the sultan's robes are like the contours of the horse's body. Leaves are painted in the same pointillist technique. Faces are Mongolian in type and heavily shaded. In the earlier picture there is already the hint of a European distant vista at the top of the page: trees are reduced in scale and executed in transparent washes of colour, suggesting both distance and atmospheric perspective. The Prague painting carries this tendency even further. The artist may have seen European prints and paintings and decided to copy certain details. It is well known that Indian princes were avid collectors of European arts and crafts. Possibly Ibrahim obtained western works of art through Portuguese Goa, which lay only two hundred and fifty kilometres away.

In fact, Ibrahim went even further, for it is known that he employed at Bijapur at least one European artist, trained in the late sixteenth-century style of the Haarlem school. In November 1605, a number of European artists left the court of Emperor Rudolf II at Prague in the company of a group of Iranians, who had hired them on the instructions of Shah Abbas I of Persia (1587-1629), keen to have foreign artists and craftsmen at his court.

The name, though not the works, of one of these artists is known. His name was Cornelius Heda, a native of Haarlem, and a court painter of Rudolf II in Prague. Being a pupil of Cornelius van Haarlem, he obviously belonged to the local school of Mannerist painters. War and storms at sea made it impossible for him to reach his destination, Persia. He finally landed in India, was imprisoned in Goa, but escaped and fled to Bijapur. There he painted, for the art-loving king Ibrahim Adil Shah II, a painting with the astonishing theme of Venus, Bacchus and Cupid. The king was enchanted, kept the painting for two hours on his lap, and appointed the former painter of Rudolf II as his court painter and adviser.<sup>54</sup>

Although none of Heda's paintings have survived, in Europe or India, his presence at Bijapur is attested by a letter which he wrote from Naurasapur, a suburb of the capital. His exotic style must have been tremendously popular with Ibrahim. Again and again we see heavily shaded

faces, distant vistas of castles on crags, and modelled draperies in Bijapuri miniatures, western elements which probably enjoyed a vogue because of the prestigious influence of Cornelius Heda; and perhaps other western painters as well.

The main problem with the Prague portrait is the puzzling Persian inscription that runs along the top and bottom of the page onto which the painting has been pasted.<sup>55</sup> This folio once formed part of a Mughal album belonging to Emperor Jahangir. The translated inscription reads:

Glory to God. Portrait of Ibrahim Adil Khan Deccani, Governor of Bijapur, who in the knowledge of Deccani music made himself master of those who profess the art. And it is the work of Farrukh Beg in the auspicious reign, corresponding to the hijri 1019 [1610-11 AD]. Written by the lowest slave Muhammad Husam Zarin Qalam Jahangir Shahi.<sup>56</sup>

Hajek believes the inscription is proof that the Mughal artist Farrukh Beg visited the Deccan and worked for Ibrahim.<sup>57</sup> Barrett, however, believes that the painting was executed at the Mughal court by Farrukh Beg, after a lost Deccani original of c. 1595.<sup>58</sup>

As the painting fits perfectly into the chronology of the Leningrad painter's style, it is difficult to see the hand of Farrukh Beg in it. Although Farrukh Beg used many Deccani motives – conical turbans, long waist sashes and thick chenar trees – he transformed them into hard crystalline forms of classical restraint, quite unlike the earthy exaggeration of our artist. Farrukh Beg may have come from the Deccan to the Mughal court and specialized in an exotic neo-Deccani style: Jahangir obviously liked this manner, for at least two other artists – Muhammad Ali and Aqa Reza Jahangiri – worked in similar, exotic modes.<sup>59</sup> If so, Jahangir's scribe, Zarin Qalam, may have mistakenly attributed many Deccani originals in the imperial Mughal library to the hand of Farrukh Beg.

The portrait of Ibrahim Adil Shah II riding a bull elephant, probably by the Leningrad painter, is in a looser style, perhaps because of its small size (71-72).<sup>60</sup> The elephant may be Ibrahim's favourite, Atash Khan, about whom he sings in the *Kitab-i nauras*.<sup>61</sup> Behind Atash Khan, the smaller female elephant may be Chanchal, his mate, whom Ibrahim was forced to send as a gift to Akbar in 1604.<sup>62</sup> Both elephants, one with massive jewelled tusks, the other without tusks, appear in the background of the Prague portrait (70 and col. pl. x).

The landscape resembles the magic world of the Leningrad page (69 and col. pl. ix). Tiny dabs of paint represent foliage. Thin washes of colour at the top of the page suggest a distant vista, while swaying plum blossoms frame the sultan like an aureole. European influences have become stronger, suggesting a somewhat later date of c. 1600-10. The palette is no longer iridescent, as in Iranian painting: instead, earthy tones of green and brown predominate. The groom, in the lower right-hand corner, wears a Renaissance cape and knee-breeches, copied from a European source.

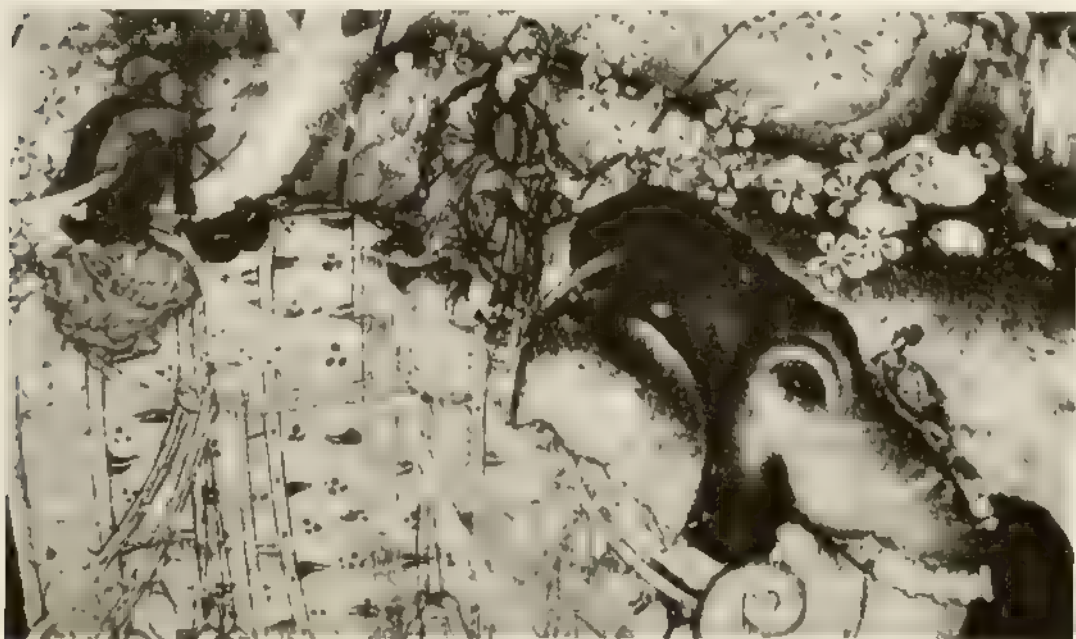
Another male elephant, in Benares, perhaps Atash Khan, loaded down with heavy gold jewellery, can also be attributed to the Leningrad painter (73).<sup>63</sup> The massive animal strides through a green meadow, which has more in common with the luminous backgrounds of early Flemish painting than with the gardens of Persianate miniatures. The groom, in European costume, gracefully approaching the elephant with an arm-load of hay, derives from representations of Summer, a figure bearing the fruits of the harvest, in sixteenth-century Dutch prints depicting the Four Seasons.<sup>64</sup> The Persian inscription on the mount



71. (RIGHT) *Sultan Ibrahim  
Adil Shah is riding an elephant*  
Attributed here to the  
Leningrad painter  
Bijapur, c. 1600–10  
14.1 × 10.5 cm  
Private collection



72. (BELOW) Detail of 71



*amal-i dakaniyan* ('work of the Deccanis') proves that Deccani art was known and appreciated outside the Deccan.

A small painting of a horse and groom in the Victoria and Albert Museum, is the mirror image of the Benares painting and must be by the same artist (74 and col. pl. xi).<sup>65</sup> The groom, in similar European costume, rushes to control a richly caparisoned horse whose pose and ornaments resemble those of the Benares elephant. Compared to the previous four paintings, a tendency towards abbreviation is apparent. Only the thinnest washes of colour are used to represent distant trees, and the foreground plants have been reduced to delicate dabs of paint. The Leningrad painter was clearly moving away from the highly finished style of his early pictures towards a freer, more abstract, but increasingly incoherent idiom, perhaps because of advancing age. This picture may date from c. 1610, or later.

Abstraction is carried even further in the delicate drawing of a similar subject in the Kasturbhai Lalbhai Collection, Ahmedabad (75).<sup>66</sup> A horse and groom run through a



73. (OPPOSITE) *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah's favourite elephant Atash Khan*  
 Attributed here to the Leningrad painter  
 Bijapur, c. 1600–10  
 15.5 × 19 cm  
 Babu Sitaram Sahu Collection, Benares

74. (RIGHT) *Groom calming his horse*  
 Attributed here to the Leningrad painter  
 Bijapur, c. 1610  
 11.4 × 10.3 cm  
 Victoria and Albert Museum,  
 London, i.s. 88–1965  
 See col. pl. XI on p. 107

75. (BELOW) *Galloping horse and groom*  
 Bijapur, c. 1610–20  
 Kasturbhai Lalbhai Collection, Ahmedabad







76. *Elephant reaching into a tree*  
Signed, probably spuriously,  
by Farrukh Husain  
Bijapur, c. 1620  
Present location unknown



77. *Elephant combat*  
Signed, probably spuriously,  
by Farrukh Husain  
Bijapur, c. 1620  
Present location unknown

magically swaying field of giant flowers, painted in gorgeous tones of blue and salmon on an uncoloured ground. Dots and dashes, which in the Victoria and Albert picture represent recognizable objects, are now completely non-figurative, enhancing the sense of speed and excitement. This page may be a very late work by the Leningrad painter, but is more likely to be by a lesser artist, strongly influenced by the master's style.

Two other drawings, lightly touched with colour, are by the same hand (76–77).<sup>67</sup> The first depicts a shackled elephant reaching into a tree with its trunk, the second, an elephant combat. Dots, dashes and stippling, as well as strong pigments on an uncoloured ground, link





78. *Elephant combat*  
Ahmadnagar or Bijapur,  
early seventeenth century  
18.9 × 26.3 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection,  
San Diego



79. *Combat between a man  
and a lion*  
Mid sixteenth century (?)  
Present location unknown

these drawings firmly to the Lalbhai picture. Both bear written attributions to Farrukh Husain, which are certainly false, for these charming, but weak drawings can hardly be the work of Ibrahim's favourite painter. A finer version of the elephant combat is in the Binney Collection (78) <sup>68</sup> Although it has been recently attributed to Farrukh Husain, <sup>69</sup> it is more closely related to the small group of works from late sixteenth-century Ahmadnagar, especially the *Royal picnic* in the India Office Library (17)

All four drawings seem to be the sedate descendants of a tremendously vigorous painting depicting a combat between a hunter and an enormous lion (79).<sup>70</sup> The fine stippling on the



80. *Subduing an enraged elephant*  
Ahmadnagar or Bijapur, c. 1600  
28.2 × 20.6 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego



lion's body, the swaying reeds and their giant seed heads, executed in pointillist technique, and the hunter's Mongolian face suggest an early Deccani origin. Later Deccani paintings, like the *Fighting cranes* (61), share its turbulent mood and distinctive way of depicting water and plants. Although an Ahmadnagar connection cannot be ruled out, the picture may well represent an early phase of Bijapur painting, otherwise lost, with which the Leningrad painter was familiar as a young man.

A similar turbulent spirit is present in *Subduing an enraged elephant*, in the Binney Collection (80).<sup>71</sup> Everything in the picture twists, turns or explodes, epitomizing the energy of early Deccani painting. Although the flowering tree, iridescent rocks and costumes resemble conventions used by the Leningrad painter, the mood differs. The elephant's heavily stippled eye recalls both the Binney *Elephant combat* (78) and certain motifs in the Ahmadnagari *Royal picnic* (17). This artist must have worked c. 1600, at Bijapur or Ahmadnagar.

Another group of paintings, all by the same artist, formerly attributed to either Golconda or Ahmadnagar, can now be attributed with certainty to Bijapur. This group includes the *Yogini*, in the Chester Beatty Library (82 and col. pl. xii), and the *Siesta*, in Berlin (85 and col. pl. xiii). All are brilliant developments of the bold, sketchy style of a Deccani Urdu manuscript in the British Library, entitled *Pem nem* (*The law of love*), about the passion of Ratan Sen, raja of Chitor, for the princess of Ceylon (81).<sup>72</sup> It contains thirty-four miniatures by three different hands. The author Hasan Manjhu Khalji writes that he composed the work in 990 AH/1590–91 AD. Its Bijapur provenance is undeniable for, in his introduction, the author describes the city of Bijapur, Ibrahim Adil Shah II, his *tambur* Moti Khan, his favourite elephant Atash Khan, and the *Kitab-i nauras*.

The date of the manuscript is open to question. Since there is no colophon, the date 1590–91 may not be the date of the book's actual execution. In his introduction, the author refers to the suburb of Naurasapur, which is thought to have been constructed in 1599.<sup>73</sup> If the reading of the passage concerning the departure of the elephant Chanchal is correct, then a date of at least 1604 is probable, for Ibrahim sent Chanchal as a gift to Akbar in that year.<sup>74</sup> A later dating would also explain references to the king's musical talents and to his book of songs, accomplishments which are likelier in 1605, when he was thirty-four, than in 1590, when he was only nineteen.

The manuscript's paintings were coarsely executed in bold, frenetic brushstrokes by some of Bijapur's finest painters. Colours are fiery and fantastic. Red meadows, orange trees, violet rocks and golden skies create an electrifying, sometimes comical, effect. One of the painters is also known through another, much more polished work, the *Yogini* in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (82 and col. pl. xii), formerly attributed to Golconda.<sup>75</sup> This artist, the most talented to have worked on the *Pem nem*, painted the book's first four miniatures.<sup>76</sup> His opening illustration, on folio 46a, depicting a young prince conversing with a dark *yogini*, remarkably like the Dublin figure, shows his taste for heavily shaded draperies, golden skies and European distant vistas (81).

A voluptuous woman with superhuman powers is a recurrent theme in Indian art. She is the *ruhani*, or earth spirit, conjured up to aid just kings, as in the *Nujum al ulum*;<sup>77</sup> she is the *devi*, or mother goddess, and the *yakshini*, or fertility spirit, basic to the most primitive religious levels of the subcontinent, but displayed as well at the entrance to Buddhist and Hindu sanctuaries. As the embodiment of the mysterious forces of disease and destruction, she is worshipped as Kali, the black one, goddess of destruction.



81. A page (fol. 46a) of the  
*Pem nem* manuscript  
Attributed here to the Dublin painter  
Bijapur, early seventeenth century  
24 × 16 cm (folio)  
British Library, London, Add. 16880

In the Dublin picture (82 and col. pl. xii), she appears as a religious mendicant, or *yogini*, her body smeared with ash, endowed with special powers resulting from severe austerities. Her magical, rather than her saintly qualities are stressed. She is a sorceress, wearing extravagant jewels, secretly communicating with a bird. Her face is strange and exotic, like a *ferangi*, or European. Fantastic plants undulate beside her. Her gleaming palace beckons to us, but its stony whiteness is like a tomb. Ibrahim Adil Shah, himself immersed in unorthodox rites, must have been intrigued by the picture's dark ambiguities. The *Yogini* may symbolize the seductive heresies which rivalled Islam for the young king's mind.

The same artist, whom we can call the Dublin painter, probably painted the *Madonna and child*, based on a European print, in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC (83).<sup>78</sup> The madonna is of the same European facial type, with heavily stippled features, and wears innumerable pearl chokers on her long, dark neck, like the *yogini*. Trees are similarly composed of pointillist dabs of paint. The picture retains its original Bijapuri mount of red and blue marbled paper.



82. *Yogini*

Attributed here to the Dublin painter

Bijapur, early seventeenth century

19.4 × 11.7 cm

Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, 11a (3)

See col. pl. xii on p. 108





83. *Madonna and child*

Attributed here to the Dublin painter

Bijapur, early seventeenth century

16 × 11.1 cm

Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC, 07.155



x1. *Groom calming his horse*

Attributed here to the Leningrad painter

Byapur, c.1610

11.4 × 10.3cm

Victoria and Albert Museum, London

See p. 98 and black and white illustration 74



xii. *Yogini*

Attributed here to the Dublin painter

Bijapur, early seventeenth century

19.4 × 11.7cm

Chester Beatty Library, Dublin

See p. 103 and black and white illustration 82





84. *The kiss*  
Attributed here to  
the Dublin painter  
Bijapur, early  
seventeenth century  
19.3 x 12.3 cm  
Topkapi Saray Museum,  
Istanbul, H.2138, fol. 37(b)

*The kiss*, in the Topkapi Saray Museum, Istanbul, is by the same hand (84).<sup>79</sup> A gnarled chenar tree again dominates the composition, a row of wind-swept plants parallel the lower edge of the painting and there is the same sharp division as in the *Yogini*, between a dark foreground and a lighter background.

Much more evocative is the same artist's depiction of a prince dozing in a garden, in the Islamisches Museum Berlin (GDR), dubbed the *Siesta* when it was first published many years ago (85 and col. pl. xiii).<sup>80</sup> It captures both the languorous mood of a sultry Deccani afternoon and the easy-going atmosphere of Ibrahim Adil Shah's court. Neither the glory of conquest

nor the task of governing was given much importance, instead, the young sultan devoted himself to the arts, including the art of living.

The sleeping prince has the same features as the young man in *The kiss* (84) and resembles Ibrahim when he was still beardless at the age of nineteen, in the 1590 portrait (49 and col. pl. vi). As the *Siesta*, the *Yogini* (82 and col. pl. xii), the *Madonna and child* (83) and *The kiss* are all approximately the same size, they may have formed part of a small, lyrical album of paintings, all by the Dublin painter, depicting the life, loves and interests of the adolescent Ibrahim Adil Shah II.<sup>81</sup> Since it is unlikely that these pictures were executed before 1605,



85. (LEFT) *Siesta*  
Attributed here to the Dublin painter  
Bijapur, early seventeenth century  
20.6 × 14.2 cm  
Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR),  
T. 4595, fol. 36  
See col. pl. XIII on p. 117

86. (OPPOSITE) *Ascetic visited  
by a yogini*  
Attributed here to the Dublin painter  
Bijapur, early seventeenth century  
30.3 × 22.6 cm  
Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR),  
T. 4596, fol. 42  
See col. pl. XIV on p. 118

when he was thirty-four, they may be idealized portraits of the sultan, who was made to look like a beardless youth, the conventional ideal of beauty in Persian literature.

The large and stunning depiction of an *Ascetic visited by a yogini*, also in the Islamisches Museum, is by the same artist, though probably a decade or so later (86 and col. pl. xiv).<sup>82</sup> The ethereal background of his earlier paintings has now become crowded with palaces and little figures, evoking the hubbub of the world which the saint has left. Shading on textiles has hardened into decorative patterns, lines separating planes have become fussily elaborate and colours are richer and darker. Gold and grainy lapis lazuli are abundantly used for the sky and





the saint's waterpot, which sparkles like a faceted gem. Bijapuri taste was clearly moving towards sumptuous effects of jewel-like splendour just short of gaudiness. Perhaps through western influence, our artist, whose faces were always very conventional, gives the saint an expression of unsettling realism. As the *yogini* pays him homage, he turns away from her to us, as if embarrassed by the human tendency to transform people into objects of worship.<sup>83</sup>

A marvellous fifteenth-century Turkman painting of lions beneath a gnarled tree, in one of the Fatch albums in the Topkapi Saray, Istanbul (87), reveals a fascinating relationship with Deccani paintings such as the *Ascetic visited by a yogini*. The central chenar tree in the Bijapur painting obviously derives from such Turkman antecedents, and the ascetic's pet lions are so similar to the Turkman ones that they could almost have been painted from the same pounce. Turkman princes are known to have emigrated from western Iran to the Deccan in the fifteenth century, such striking similarities in the arts of the two regions suggest that Turkman painters accompanied their patrons, transferring the earthy artistic traditions of Tabriz to the Deccan.<sup>84</sup>

Only two paintings from Ibrahim's reign bear signatures of unquestioned authenticity.



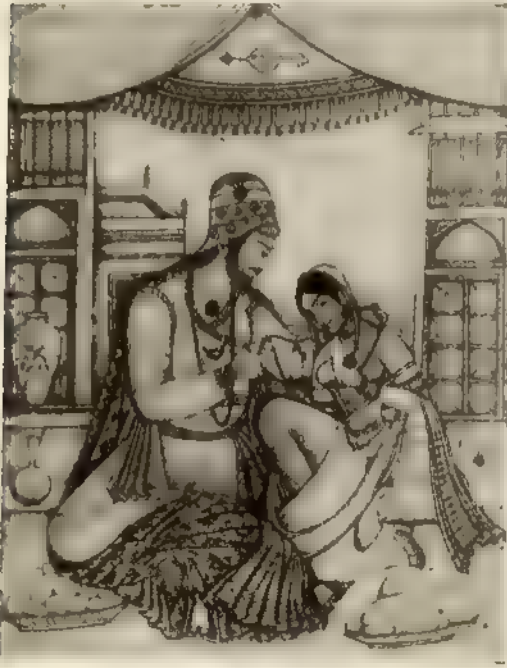
87. *Fantastic landscape*  
Probably by Shaykhi  
Tabriz, Iran, c. 1478–90  
Topkapi Saray Museum, Istanbul, H. 2153, fol. 146 b



88. *Maiden leading a gazelle*  
Signed by Ali Jafar  
Bijapur, early  
seventeenth century  
12.6 × 8 cm  
Private collection

One depicts a young woman, perhaps a *ragini*, as delicate as a butterfly, leading a gazelle across a rocky landscape (88).<sup>85</sup> The palette of orange and violet-pink, and the white palaces on the hill show the Dublin painter's influence. A rock to the left of the girl bears the artist's signature in *naskh*: *kar-i ali jafar* ('The work of Ali Jafar'). A lightly coloured drawing of grooms shoeing a horse, in the Khandalavala Collection, Bombay, bears an identical signature within a cartouche.<sup>86</sup>

A drawing with brilliant touches of red, blue and green, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, depicts Ibrahim Adil Shah placing a sparkling lapis lazuli necklace around the neck of his lover (89).<sup>87</sup> Using strong lines of unvaried thickness and heavily shaded contours, the artist constructs hard, round shapes which recall the coy eroticism of South Indian ivories. A *Yogini playing a tambur*, in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR), is by the same hand (90 and col. pl. xv).<sup>88</sup> Brittle shapes and sharp colours, perfectly complemented by the marbled-paper border, evoke the effect of carved coral. The hard precision of these two drawings, perhaps painted after Ibrahim's death (1627), again leads us to the conclusion that brilliant jewel-like effects were replacing the lush, painterly romanticism which had been popular earlier in Ibrahim's reign. These decorative tendencies reached their height during the reign of Ibrahim's successor, Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah (1627–56).



89. (ABOVE) *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II presenting a necklace to his lover*  
 Bijapur, second quarter seventeenth century  
 10.4 × 8.2 cm

Victoria and Albert Museum, London,  
 I.S. 48-1956 (small Clive album), fol. 1b

90. (RIGHT) *Yogini playing a tambur*  
 Bijapur, second quarter seventeenth century  
 14.5 × 7.5 cm  
 Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR), T. 4591, fol. 13  
 See col. pl. xv on p. 119



## NOTES

1. Joshi (1950), pp. 184-96. Professor Joshi edited and translated into English the portions of Asad Beg's memoirs relating to Ibrahim Adil Shah II. All the details concerning Asad Beg's mission in the following pages are from Joshi's article.
2. Rafi ud din Shirazi *Tadhkirat al mulk* India Office Library, Persian Ms. 3541, fol. 384. Quoted by Skelton (1958), p. 99.
3. See p. 96 and n. 59.
4. For Zuhuri's life in Iran and India, see N. Ahmad (1953).
5. For a complete translation of the three parts of Zuhuri's *Seh nasr*, see Ghani, appendices A-C.
6. Ibid., pp. 336-37.
7. Ibid., pp. 465-66.
8. Ibid., p. 340.
9. Ibid., p. 341, n. 2.
10. Ibid., p. 439.
11. Ibid., p. 441-45.
12. Ibid., pp. 462-63.
13. Ibrahim Adil Shah II
14. Ibid., p. 146
15. Ibid., pp. 12-13.
16. See pp. 60-61.
17. Soustiel and David (1974), no. 25.
18. Ghani, p. 365.
19. Ibid., p. 335.
20. Goetz (1950), pl. VIII; Gray (1955), pl. III.



21. *Aviraham sah vajapur ro* ('Ibrahim Shah of Byapur') and below that *aduni ri kotho su an (g) s (?) sana 1748* ('from the treasury of Adoni, part 5 (?), year 1748/1691 AD'). See Skelton (1958), p. 102, fig. 2.
22. See p. 70.
23. 553. Previously unpublished but described in Gray (1950), no. 810. Size: 13.7 × 11.9 cm.
24. Ibrahim Adil Shah II, p. 2, n. 1.
25. Yazdani (1935), pp. 211-16, frontispiece.
26. Skelton (1958), pp. 99-100, fig. 1.
27. Chester Beatty Library, Dublin. Arnold and Wilkinson, no. 5; Barrett and Gray, p. 94.
28. British Library, Or. 1362. Barrett and Gray, p. 97.
29. British Library, Or. 7573. Stchoukine (1931), figs 1-9; Barrett and Gray, pp. 100-1.
30. Ms. Douce Or. b. 2 (1), fol. 1a. Previously unpublished. I am indebted to Robert Skelton who brought this painting to my attention and provided slides of it.
31. Signed: 'Mir Chand, son of Ganga Ram'. Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR), F. 4954, fol. 40. The fact that Mir Chand, a Lucknow artist, produced a copy of the Bodleian picture strongly suggests that the latter work was in Lucknow during the late eighteenth century. Many important Deccani paintings must have been in Lucknow collections at that time. Much of the Berlin Collection, which includes such major Deccani works as the *Siesta* (85), the *Ascectic visited by a yogini* (86), the *Yogini playing a tambur* (90), the *Tree on the island of waquwaq* (136), the *Composite horse* (134) and the *Sleeping lady* (167), belonged to Colonel Antoine Polier, a Swiss engineer and architect living in Lucknow during the late eighteenth century (see M. Archer (1972), pp. 96-106).
32. Geijbels, p. 183.
33. 1937 4-10 03. Gray (1938), pl. c; Barrett and Gray, p. 126.
34. Falk and Archer, no. 402; also reproduced: Gray (1950), pl. 145; Pinder-Wilson (1976), p. 91. Another portrait of the same mullah has recently come to light and was included in The Indian Heritage Exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum in 1982. In it the mullah sits beneath a canopy hung with ostrich eggs attended by Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II himself, bearing a cup and flask. The painting is signed by 'the house-born [servant] Ali Reza'. Skelton (*The Indian Heritage* (London, 1982), no. 55) identifies this artist with the Bikaner painter of the same name responsible for the picture of Lakshmi Narayana, now in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares (Khandalavala, Chandra and Chandra, pl. I, no. 83, p. 48). Given that the name Ali Reza is extremely common and that stylistic differences abound between the portrait of the mullah and the Benares painting, it seems unlikely that the same artist could have painted both works. The mullah may be Mullah Muhammad Bijapuri, an identification made possible by an inscribed portrait, painted after a lost Bijapuri original, by the Mughal artist, Hashim, in the Metropolitan Museum, New York (E. Grube *The World of Islam* (London, 1976), fig. 100).
35. 1937 4-10 02. Gray (1938), pl. c; Skelton (1958), fig. 5; Barrett and Gray, p. 127.
36. The painting was catalogued as a *Portrait of a musician* in the 1976 World of Islam Exhibition, held at the British Museum; Pinder-Wilson (1976), no. 176 (not reproduced). However, the resemblance of the subject to the inscribed portraits of Ibrahim in Bikaner (50) and Prague (70), as well as to the late seventeenth-century portraits in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, (Irvine, pl. 34), and Vienna (Strzygowski, Kramrsch and Wellesz, abb. 37), confirms Ibrahim's identity.
37. Beach (1965), p. 87.
38. M.G. 9130. Skelton (1958), fig. 6. Skelton calls the painting a fragment (p. 122) but it may be complete, as its size (12.5 × 18.5 cm) is similar to all of the Bodleian painter's other works, the only exception being the *Dervish receiving a visitor*, which is a good deal larger (26.5 × 19.7 cm).
39. M.A. 2462.
40. Binney (1973), no. 121.
41. A.G. 753. Previously unpublished.
42. 14.663. Coomaraswamy (1929), fig. 119; Coomaraswamy (1930), pl. 25; Skelton (1958), fig. 17; Barrett and Gray, p. 125; Welch (1978b), pl. 20.
43. Archer, W. G. (1960), pl. 16.
44. Falk and Archer, no. 239; Gray (1950), pl. 146. Two other versions of this picture, one mirror reversed, are in the Saltykov Shstshedrine Public Library, Leningrad, in the same album (Dorn 489) as the Golconda painting *Procession of Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah riding an elephant with courtiers and musicians* (152-54).
45. Bequest of Cora Timken Burnett, 1957, 57.51.30. I am grateful to Stuart Cary Welch for bringing this painting to my attention.
46. Schimmel (1978), p. 20.
47. Pope, pl. 174; Grube, no. 74.
48. Ipsiroglu, pls 29-39.
49. Leningrad album, fol. 2. Ivanov, Grek and Aki-mushkin, pl. 81.
50. See pp. 69-70.
51. See p. 100.
52. Compare its rich setting and overall mood of fantastic splendour with the work of Shah Tahmasp's finest painter, Sultan Muhammad, especially his masterpiece the *Court of Gayumars* in the Houghton *Shah nameh* (Welch (1979), col. pls on pp. 17, 50). Welch believes that the roots of

Sultan Muhammad's brilliant work lie in the earthy style of late fifteenth-century Tabriz painting at the court of the Turkman sultan Yakub Beg Aq Qoyunlu (1478-90) (Ibid., pp 19-24). See also Robinson, pp. 217-43.

53. A. 12182. Hajek, pls 10-14.
54. Translated into English by Eberhard Fischer from Kurz, pp. 5-6. Kurz's information comes from an autobiographical letter written by the painter Heda from Nauraspur, a suburb of Bijapur, especially built as the centre for Ibrahim Adil Shah's artistic pursuits. See Van der Willigen, pp. 52ff., 367ff. I am indebted to Ebba Koch for bringing Kurz's article to my attention.
55. The portion of the inscription at the top of this album leaf is not visible in the reproduction.
56. Barrett (1969), p. 158.
57. Hajek, p. 72.
58. Barrett (1969), p. 158.
59. The question of the Mughal artist Farrukh Beg's Deccani connections is a complicated, unresolved issue. Both the *Yogini* in the Chester Beatty Library (82 and col. pl. xii), which I attribute to the Dublin painter, and the painting of an elephant, in the Sitaram Sahu Collection, Benares (73), which I attribute to the Leningrad painter (Farrukh Husain?), Skelton has attributed to Farrukh Beg (Skelton (1957), p. 408). According to Skelton, Farrukh Beg came to India from Iran in 1585, worked at the Mughal court until 1600, went to Bijapur between 1600 and 1610 (where he worked for Ibrahim Adil Shah under the name of Farrukh Husain) and then returned to the Mughal atelier imbued with Deccani stylistic elements, pursuing his career under Emperor Jahangir (1605-27).

In fact, there is no textual evidence for Farrukh Beg's emigration to the Deccan, although several writers have recently stated that 'it is recorded' that Farrukh Beg went to the Deccan between 1600 and 1610. On stylistic grounds, I feel that it is unlikely that Farrukh Beg and Farrukh Husain are the same person. The work of the former is restrained, cool and official, suited to the tastes of the Mughal court; the latter's work (if he is identical to the Leningrad painter) has a Deccani exuberance, combining earthy colours, aggressive patterns and fantastic shapes that lack restraint but never energy. Farrukh Beg's faces are invariably long and oval, like masks, with unblemished, marble-like complexions, quite unlike Deccani faces with their intense, introspective expressions.

There is an iconographic link with the Leningrad painter. Both artists use such motifs as conical turbans, flowering fruit trees in the background and a thick chenar tree in one corner of their paintings. This link suggests that Farrukh Beg

may have initially come to the Mughal court from the Deccan where he had to adjust his 'excessive' Deccani style to suit Mughal patrons. However, it is just as possible that he was a Persian; either origin would help to explain the presence of strong Persianate elements in his style.

There is also no literary evidence to support Farrukh Beg's hypothetical move from Iran to India. The passage in the *Akbar nama* which has been brought forward to prove the artist's Iranian origins (Skelton (1957), p. 393) is not convincing. It simply states that Farrukh Beg had been in the service of Akbar's half brother Muhammad Hakim in Kabul and that he left that city for Akbar's court in 1585, following his patron's death: 'Farrukh Beg Musavvir and others received suitable robes and horses, and trays of muhrs and rupis. Various favours were conferred upon them.' (Beveridge, p. 714.) This passage has been interpreted by scholars in the field to mean that Farrukh Beg was in Kabul on his way to India from the west, that is Safavid Iran. However, he could just as well have lived in Mughal India before going to Kabul, as it was a part of the empire at that time.

Since Skelton's article was published, the work of another Mughal artist, Muhammad Ali, has more clearly emerged. He, like Farrukh Beg, used Safavid and Deccani elements. Skelton attributed two of Muhammad Ali's paintings to Farrukh Beg, but so much new material has emerged since, some of it signed, that a separation of the two artists' work is overdue. The two paintings are the *Poet in a garden* in the Boston Museum (65) (Barrett and Gray, p. 125) and the *Young prince on horseback*, formerly in the Rothschild Collection, Paris (Stchoukine (1935), fig. 6). At the time of Skelton's article (1957), no other works in Muhammad Ali's style, or bearing his signature, had come to light and it was logical to link him with Farrukh Beg. Muhammad Ali's faces are, however, rounder and more doll-like, and occasionally more expressive, as in the *Poet in a garden*. He seems to have been strongly influenced by two Deccani artists, the Bodleian painter (54 and col. pl. vii) and the Dublin painter, responsible for the Berlin *Siesta* (85 and col. pl. xiii) and the Dublin *Yogini* (82 and col. pl. xii). Muhammad Ali probably copied the works of these two Deccani artists for Jahangir and was influenced by them.

At present, I feel that the following paintings can be grouped together to form a tentative corpus of Muhammad Ali's work:

1. *Youth with a falcon*, Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC, 53.93. Written attribution to



XIII. *Siesta*

Attributed here to the Dublin painter

Bijapur, early seventeenth century

20.6 × 14.2 cm

Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR)

See p. 109 and black and white illustration 85





XIV. (OPPOSITE)  
*Ascetic visited by  
 a yogini*  
 Attributed here to  
 the Dublin painter  
 Bijapur, early  
 seventeenth century  
 30.3 × 22.6 cm  
 Islamisches Museum,  
 Berlin (GDR)  
 See p. 111 and black and  
 white illustration 86

XV. (RIGHT) *Yogini  
 playing a tambur*  
 Bijapur, second quarter  
 seventeenth century  
 14.5 × 7.5 cm  
 Islamisches Museum,  
 Berlin (GDR)  
 See p. 113 and black and  
 white illustration 90





xvi *Sultan Ali Adil Shah II with a courtesan*  
 Bijapur, c 1660–70  
 20.6 × 31 cm  
 Private collection  
 See p. 147 and black and white illustration 117



- Muhammad Ali. Ettinghausen (1961), pl. 9.
2. *Poet in a garden*, Boston Museum, 14.663. Barrett and Gray, p. 125; Skelton (1957), fig. 17; Coomaraswamy (1929), fig. 119.
3. *Young prince on horseback*, formerly Rothschild Collection, Paris. Stchoukine (1935), fig. 6; Skelton (1957), fig. 9.
4. *Standing girl*, Binney Collection. Written attribution to the artist (possibly the signature). Binney (1973), no. 123.
5. *Boy reading a book with a dog*, India Office Library. Falk and Archer, no. 36.
6. *Boy reading a book with a dog*, Musée Guimet, Paris, 7.154. Stchoukine (1929a), no. 34 (not reproduced). Closely related to the India Office Library painting (see no. 5).
60. Private collection. Previously unpublished.
61. See p. 70.
62. See p. 68.
63. Babu Sitaram Sahu Collection, Benares. Mehta, pl. 47; Skelton (1957), fig. 14. Attributed by Skelton to the Mughal artist, Farrukh Beg.
64. I am grateful to Maria van Berge of the Custodia Foundation, Institut Néerlandais, Paris, for bringing the connection to my attention.
65. i.s. 88–1965. Pinder-Wilson (1976), p. 90.
66. Previously unpublished.
67. Previously unpublished. Present location unknown. I am grateful to Stuart Cary Welch for giving me photographs of these drawings.
68. Binney (1973), no. 124. Another version, signed by the artist Subhan Ali, is in the Salar Jang Museum (M.S.P. 686).
69. Welch (1976), no. 176. This attribution is said to be based on the drawing's similarity 'to the work of Farrukh Husain, an early seventeenth-century Bijapur artist'. In fact, no paintings have yet emerged which bear reliable written attributions to Farrukh Husain. He remains only a name, mentioned by Ibrahim Adil Shah's poet laureate Zuhuri in his *Khan-i khalil* (see pp. 69–70). The drawing published by Nazir Ahmad (1956) as an early seventeenth-century portrait of Ibrahim Adil Shah, riding an elephant named Nauras-Paiker, inscribed as the work of 'Farrukh Husain Adil Shahi', is in fact a modern forgery.
70. Present location unknown. I am indebted to Stuart Cary Welch for giving me a photograph of it.
71. Welch (1973), no. 76; Binney (1973), no. 119.
72. Add. 16880. Barrett (1969), figs 91–102; Pinder-Wilson (1976), no. 171. I am grateful to David Matthews of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London, for several helpful discussions concerning the text of the manuscript.
73. Ahmad, N. (1953), p. 194.
74. See p. 68.
75. 11A (3). Barrett (1958), pl. 7.
76. He corresponds to Barrett's Hand A (Barrett (1969), pp. 91 ff.).
77. See pp. 61–63 and (44).
78. 17.155. Ettinghausen (1963), p. 16 (described as Golconda); Atil, no. 77.
79. Album H.2137, fol. 37b. Cagman and Tanindi, pl. 45.
80. T. 4595, fol. 36. Kühnel (1923), pl. 104; Barrett (1958), pl. 6; Hickmann and Enderlein, no. 17.
81. In fact the size of these paintings is similar to the dimensions of the paintings by the Bodleian painter: the *Stout courtier* (55), the *Mullah* (57), *Ibrahim Adil Shah II holding castanets* (59 and col. pl. viii), the *Fighting cranes* (61) and the Binney portrait of Ibrahim Adil Shah II (63). It is possible that these works, of similar size and format, once formed part of the same album, or group of albums, painted for Ibrahim.
82. T. 4596, fol. 4a. Hickmann and Enderlein, no. 37. Another version of this painting, a drawing lightly touched with colour, is in the Chandigarh Museum.
83. Another painting by the Dublin painter, depicting two young scholars writing beneath a chenar tree, is in a private collection, but cannot be published at the present time. Other paintings related to this artist's style are a *yogini* in the Mittal Museum, Hyderabad, a *yogini* in the British Museum, a holyman in the Victoria and Albert Museum (in the large Clive album), and a boy in Safavid costume in the same collection (i.s. 2–1969).
84. See also pp. 153–54, 170–72. I am grateful to Stuart Cary Welch who, in conversations and his courses at Harvard University, first made me aware of this stylistic connection.
85. Sotheby's, London, 24 April 1979, lot 61.
86. Unpublished.
87. Mounted in the small Clive album, i.s. 48–1956, fol. 1b.
88. T. 4591, fol. 13. Kühnel (1923), fig. 130; Hickmann and Enderlein, no. 15.

# Mughal influence under Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah Bijapuri (1627–56)

WITH THE PARTITION of Ahmadnagar between the Mughal empire and Bijapur in 1636, Mughal forces were permanently stationed in the northern and central Deccan. Political pressure on Bijapur and Golconda increased. Intent on crushing the two kingdoms' independence, the Mughals repeatedly violated their northern borders, forcing both to accept a vague client status and to pay them an annual tribute.

Large numbers of cultivated North Indian officers came to live in the Mughal Deccan. Emperor Shah Jahan, his wife Mumtaz Mahal and Asaf Khan, Mumtaz Mahal's father, lived there intermittently in the 1630s. Aurangzeb, Shah Jahan's son and successor, was viceroy of the Deccan twice, in the 1640s and 1650s, with his capital at Aurangabad. Later, as emperor, he transferred the capital of the empire from Delhi to his camp in the south (1681–1707), never once returning to North India.<sup>1</sup>

Numerous Rajput princes served under Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb as officers and governors, notably the maharajas of Bundi, Kota and Bikaner. Successive maharajas of Kota, for example, spent almost all their lives in the Deccan, throughout the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.<sup>2</sup> These princes were accompanied by wives, relatives and servants, and it is certain that they brought painters with them, continuing their rôle as patrons of the arts from the magnificent tents in which they lived.<sup>3</sup>

The presence of Mughal and Rajput patrons and painters in the Deccan produced a revolution in Bijapuri taste. Mughal art aimed at realism; precise portraits and depictions of historical events predominated. The artist's name and the subject of the picture were often identified by inscriptions. The Deccan artist, usually anonymous, choosing above all to create a mood, used extravagantly unrealistic colours and shapes. Portraiture did exist, but conventional ideals of beauty were more important than the physical likeness of the subject, who is rarely identified in inscriptions.

During the reign of Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah, interest shifted from ideal forms to real people. Mughal-style portraits with subjects against a stark background, restrained in line and colour, gained popularity. Most Bijapuri painting from then on is brilliantly ornamental, but lacks the romanticism of earlier work. Nevertheless, vigorous gesturing, sidelong glances and a restricted use of strong Deccan colours provide the vitality that is often lacking in contemporary Mughal portraits. There is also a new interest in historical record; several paintings of the mid seventeenth century are signed,<sup>4</sup> and two are dated.<sup>5</sup>





91. *Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II appearing at a palace window to a courtier*  
 Bijapur, c. 1620–30  
 16.2 × 11.9  
 Edwin Binney 3rd Collection,  
 San Diego

A painting in the Binney Collection, depicting Ibrahim Adil Shah II appearing at a palace window to a minister, in the traditional Hindu custom of *darshan*, may date from the very end of Ibrahim's reign, though its sobriety and static poses have more in common with paintings done for his son, Muhammad (91).<sup>6</sup> Such pictures suggest that Bijapuri artists were becoming increasingly aware of stylistic trends at the Mughal court. Diplomatic and military contacts with the Mughals must have provided Deccani princes with opportunities to collect Mughal pictures, and perhaps employ Mughal artists. However, no Mughal paintings bearing Deccani seals or inscriptions have emerged to provide proof that the Deccanis were collecting Mughal art. Nor was there any real evidence that Mughal artists emigrated to Bijapur, until recently.

However, a painting has now appeared which suggests that at least one Mughal artist, and a very good one at that, was working in the Bijapuri atelier early in Muhammad's reign (92).<sup>7</sup> Formerly in the Kevorkian Collection, New York, it is uninscribed, but is clearly a portrait of Muhammad as a young man. A comparison with three inscribed portraits of the sultan

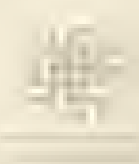


establishes his identity; those in the Manucci album,<sup>8</sup> in a *darshan* scene in the India Office Library (99) and in a tiny manuscript of the *Divan* of Urfi, dated 1636, in a private collection.<sup>9</sup> In all these portraits, the sultan has a long, slightly aquiline nose, tightly pursed lips, a thin beard and wears his turban in the fashion set by Shah Jahan. As he was born in 1613, and appears to be in his early twenties in the Kevorkian page, it can be dated to c. 1635.

The figure of the sultan could only have been executed by an artist trained at the Mughal atelier around 1630. Bichitr's portrait of Shah Jahan, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, inscribed by the emperor himself, 'a good portrait of me in my fortieth year [1632], the work of Bichitr', astounds by its similarity (93).<sup>10</sup> The sultan's turban, belt and the dagger are



92. *Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah*  
Attributed here to the Bodleian painter  
and a Mughal artist, working together  
Bijapur, c. 1635  
15.8 x 8.6 cm  
Formerly Kevorkian Collection,  
New York



obviously inspired by the Mughal portrait. The posture of his body, except for his hands, is so similar that it could have been drawn from the same pounce. Even his face resembles the emperor's. Clearly the iconography developed at the Mughal atelier for Shah Jahan was copied at Bijapur as a model for Adil Shahi portraits.

This stylistic graft must have been caused by the migration of Mughal artists to the Deccan, carrying tracings or pounces of the emperor with them. The painter of the Kevorkian portrait probably arrived in the Deccan shortly before executing it, for he had assimilated little of the Bijapuri style. Gradually, however, the Mughal input assumes a more local flavour, as in the Jaipur *darbar* scene of 1651, which has stronger colours and more

93. *Shah Jahan*  
Inscribed by Shah Jahan:  
'A good portrait of me in my  
fortueth year, the work of Bichitr'  
Mughal, 1632  
22.1 × 13.3 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum,  
London, I.M. 17-1925





94. *Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah before a distant vista*  
Signed: 'Work of Muhammad Khan,  
son of Miyan Chand'  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
15.9 × 7.9 cm  
City Palace Museum, Jaipur, A.G. 765

stylized forms (95). This idiom will be used with ever increasing stylization, throughout the reigns of Ali II (1656–72) and Sikandar Adil Shah (1672–86)

The Kevorkian portrait (92) baffles nonetheless. Although the figure of the sultan is coolly Mughal, the colours have a sombre Deccani glow and the background a wild intensity. Muhammad stands against a deep mauve ground, wearing a glistening silver and gold *ikat* robe and a canary-yellow shawl. Star-like flowers shimmer at his feet. The tree is full of tiny chirping birds and its foliage is painted in the familiar Deccani pointillist technique with yellow, red and green dabs of paint, as in the British Museum portrait of Sultan Ibrahim (59 and col. pl. VIII). The distant vista of palaces is in grisaille. Birds soar at the top of the page. All these details, as well as the effect of intense energy pouring out from the world of nature







95. *Darbar of Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah*  
Signed beneath the throne  
(but painted over): 'Work of  
Muhammad Khan, son of  
Miyan Chand'  
Inscribed on the scroll:  
'[For the accomplishments  
of the] pen . . . from  
[1651 AD] . . . for the purpose  
of the maintenance of  
Muhammad Khan, son of  
Miyan Chand, daily half a  
*hun* has been granted'  
Bijapur, dated 1651  
22.3 × 18.1 cm  
City Palace Museum,  
Jaipur, A.G. 771

behind the sultan's calm façade, are characteristic of the brilliant artist who worked for Ibrahim Adil Shah II, whom we have called the Bodleian painter, after his masterpiece in Oxford (54 and col. pl. VII).

This picture may be the uneasy alliance between two artists from different backgrounds. A Mughal artist, employing *charbas* ('pounces') of Shah Jahan, probably painted the face and figure of the sultan. The Bodleian painter coloured in his costume and painted the background. Fond of dark, mysterious tonalities, his style was appropriate for this painting, which probably conceals a hidden meaning understood only by the initiated few at court. The sultan listens to a parrot, which could, it was thought in India, transmit secrets overheard elsewhere. A conch-shell lies at his feet, while by his side a pillar supports a dish, a cup and a



glass bottle filled with red wine. All these objects must have a symbolic meaning. A white parrot is present, though unexplained, in several other Deccani paintings, including the *Dervish receiving a visitor* (54 and col. pl. vii).

It is interesting to observe the gradual absorption of this Mughal influence by Bijapuri artists. A portrait of Muhammad Adil Shah, in the City Palace Museum, Jaipur, appears to be the earliest work of an artist whose career is the only well documented one in the history of Deccani art (94). Four paintings have come to light which bear written attributions to him.<sup>11</sup> The Persian inscription in the lower right-hand corner identifies him: *amal-i muhammad khan farzand-i miyan chand* ('The work of Muhammad Khan, son of Miyan Chand'). The sultan's costume and pose are so like those of the Kevorkian picture that Muhammad Khan may have used the same pounce as the Mughal artist, placing the figure in a Deccani landscape of his own invention. He is still essentially a copyist, however, failing to mould foreign and indigenous influences into a satisfying whole.

His *darbar* scene of Muhammad Adil Shah and noblemen, also in the Jaipur Collection, is a more successful work of art (95).<sup>12</sup> Although Mughal taste is still strong in facial types, the rich palette of deep maroon, orange, bright blue and moss-green would be out of place in a Mughal picture. Moreover, the informal pose of the sultan on a canopied bed, an old Deccani convention,<sup>13</sup> and the vigorous gestures of his nobles charge the page with a particularly Deccani energy.

The painter Muhammad Khan is fond of curves:<sup>14</sup> eyes are almond shaped with sweeping lids; turbans are massive oval swirls; golden shawls loop around torsos; even necks bulge out in his favourite shape. Faces are hard edged, and always in profile. Although his figures are unvaried and his compositions static, the quality of his technique and his fondness for gold ornament produce refined, jewel-like images.

The Persian inscription on the scroll held by the courtier directly beneath the throne adds a great deal of information to our meagre knowledge about Deccani art, for it mentions both the date and the artist's name:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1 <i>farman-i humayun sharaf-i</i>      | 1 An august decree has had the honour                 |
| 2 <i>sudur yast bi janib-i</i>          | 2 of being brought to the attention of                |
| 3 <i>'uhdadaran-i mahall-i</i>          | 3 the authorities of the place of                     |
| 4 <i>tib (?) pargana-i kot (?)</i>      | 4 Tib (?) in the pargana of Kot (?)                   |
| 5 <i>qalamzad ankih az shuhur</i>       | 5 [for the accomplishments of the] pen<br>[or brush]. |
| 6 <i>sana ihda khamsh</i>               | 6, 7 The order is that from the <i>shuhur</i> year    |
| 7 <i>wa alif az . . . (wufur-i?)</i>    | 1052 from the abundance                               |
| 8 <i>marahim-i padsha</i>               | 8 of imperial munificence                             |
| 9 <i>-hana wa mazid-i 'aw</i>           | 9 and excess of                                       |
| 10 <i>-atif-i khusravana min-jumla</i>  | 10 regal benevolence from the total                   |
| 11 <i>hasil wa . . . (?) -i</i>         | 11 revenue and . . . (?) of the                       |
| 12 <i>mahall-i madhkur dar wajh-i</i>   | 12 above mentioned place for the purpose<br>of        |
| 13 <i>ruzmarra-yi muhammad khan bin</i> | 13 the maintenance of Muhammad Khan<br>son of         |
| 14 <i>miyan chand ruzina nim</i>        | 14 Miyan Chand, daily half a                          |
| 15 <i>hun 'atifa farmuda</i>            | 15 <i>hun</i> has been granted                        |

The date 1052, not in the customary Islamic era, but in a derivative calendar called *shuhur*, used at Bijapur and later in Hindu Maratha chronicles, corresponds to 1651 AD.<sup>15</sup>

The painting is crucial for reconstructing the chronology of the Deccani schools, as no other signed and dated work prior to the late eighteenth century is known. It also provides unique information concerning the position of the artist in Indo-Muslim society. The courtier who holds the scroll points exactly to the painter's name, 'Muhammad Khan, son of Miyan Chand'. His gesture underlines the painting's significance as the pictorial announcement of a royal grant to the artist and suggests that the figure in question is none other than Muhammad Khan himself. If he is the artist, this is one of very few Indian self-portraits in existence. The artist, whose jewellery and robes are as sumptuous as those of the other courtiers, must have enjoyed a very high position at court, similar to the favoured rank held by Farrukh Husain earlier in the century at the court of Ibrahim Adil Shah.<sup>16</sup>

Henceforward, according to the inscription, revenue from the town of Tib will provide the artist with a daily income of half a *hun* (sometimes called a 'gold pagoda'), the currency used in the Deccani sultanates and Hindu South India. A second Persian inscription, obscured by repainting, is just barely visible between the skirt of the throne and the arabesque at the bottom of the page. It also attributes the painting to Muhammad Khan, son of Miyan Chand, using the Persian word *farzand* for son, instead of the Arabic *ibn*, as in the inscription on the portrait of Muhammad Adil Shah in the same collection (94).

96. *The African prime minister Ikhlas Khan and a page*  
Signed on the pillow at bottom  
(but painted over): 'Work of  
Muhammad Khan,  
son of Miyan Chand'  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
11.7 × 10.8 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection,  
San Diego







Because of the rarity of inscribed Bijapuri portraits, identification of the figures in the *darbar* scene is difficult. The noble standing behind the artist is definitely Sayyid Nurullah, who appears opposite the sultan in the double portrait contained in the tiny *Divan* of Urfi, dated 1636, executed at the order of the Sayyid for presentation to the sultan.<sup>9</sup> The stout African who gestures towards the sultan is certainly the vizier, Ikhlas Khan, who managed to control both his weak-willed master and the kingdom.<sup>17</sup> The other figures cannot be identified at the present time, although the noble holding the turban pin across from the sultan is depicted, in an identical pose, in a painting in the India Office Library (99).

Another portrait of Ikhlas Khan is in the Binney Collection (96).<sup>18</sup> Seated on a mass of pink and blue pillows, attended by a page with a towel and spittoon, he reads a scroll which is unfortunately illegible. The great sweep of shawls, turbans and arabesques conforms to the painter Muhammad Khan's fondness for rhythmic curves. The African's body is basically the mirror image of the sultan's in the Jaipur throne scene (95), probably the same pounce was used for both figures. An inscription on the pillow beneath his right arm has been partly painted over, in the same way as the one beneath Muhammad Adil Shah's throne in the other picture, and is identical to it: *amal-i muhammad khan, farzand-i miyan chand* ('The work of Muhammad Khan, son of Miyan Chand').

A picture of Ikhlas Khan in the India Office Library (97) shows him holding the same

97. (OPPOSITE, LEFT)

*The African prime minister Ikhlas Khan leaning on a staff*

Attributed here to Muhammad Khan  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
13.2 × 9 cm

India Office Library, London, 409

98. (OPPOSITE, RIGHT)

*Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah*

Attributed here to Muhammad Khan  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
15.5 × 11.7 cm

British Museum, London, 1937 4–10 04

99. (RIGHT) *Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah appearing at a palace window to a courtier*

Attributed here to Muhammad Khan  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
12.4 × 8.6 cm

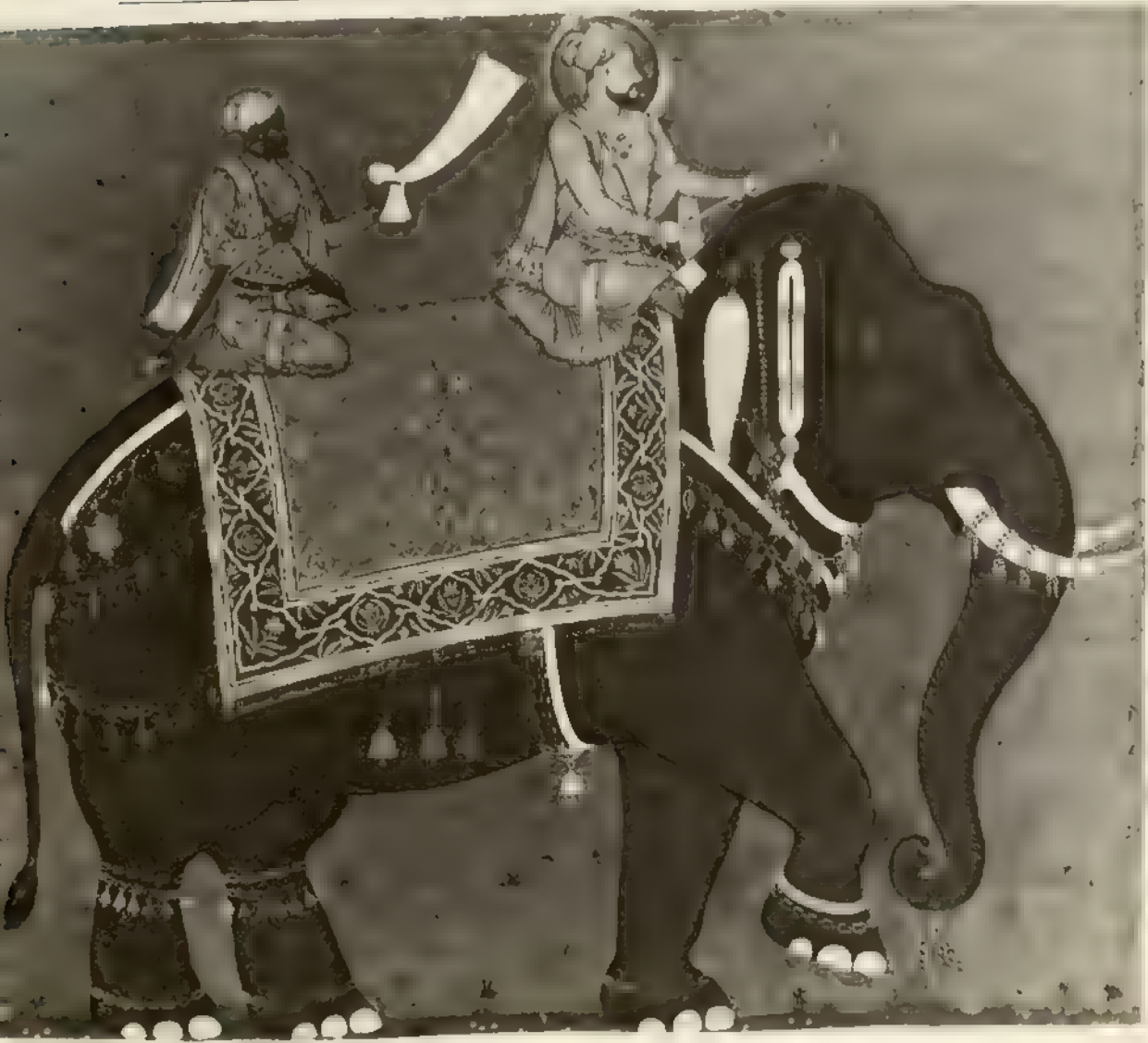
India Office Library, London, 405



jewelled staff, in nearly the same pose as in the Jaipur painting (95).<sup>19</sup> He stares severely, almost reproachfully, to the right, probably towards the portrait of Muhammad Adil Shah, now in the British Museum (98), which may have originally faced him on the opposite page of the same portrait album.<sup>20</sup> The artist, who must be Muhammad Khan, brilliantly evokes the minister's strength of will, through his massive body and grim expression, and the gentleness of the sultan, smelling a flower and holding a mango, an expression of absent-minded reverie on his face. Viewing these complementary portraits, there can be little doubt where real power lay.

Muhammad Adil Shah appears at a palace window to a courtier, in the Hindu custom of *darshan*, in a painting in the India Office Library (99).<sup>21</sup> Inscribed in Persian with the sultan's name on both front and back, it recalls the Binney *darshan* scene both in composition and in such details as the velvet textile hung over the window sill. Although the nobleman has been identified as Sayyid Nurullah,<sup>22</sup> he is in fact not the Sayyid who salutes the sultan from behind the throne in the Jaipur *darbar* scene, but instead the unnamed courtier holding a staff and turban pin standing opposite the sultan (95). The artist, who must be Muhammad Khan, used the same pounce to draw this nobleman in both paintings, as their poses are identical.

Muhammad Khan was not the sultan's most original painter. His work, though technically refined, is staid and repetitious. The portrait of Muhammad Adil Shah and Ikhlas Khan astride



a richly caparisoned elephant is obviously related to his style, though much more daring (100).<sup>23</sup> One is immediately struck by the fluid line of the animal's body and the sumptuous colours: the background is vivid blue, Ikhlas Khan wears steel-grey robes and the sultan is entirely dressed in gold, the surface of his robe pricked with a stylus to sparkle like a jewel.

The inscription, written in elegant gold *naskh*, gives the names of two hitherto unknown artists: *amal-i haider ali wa ibrahim khan* ('The work of Haider Ali and Ibrahim Khan'). At the Mughal court it is known that certain artists specialized in drawing outlines, others in colouring and still others in painting faces.<sup>24</sup> Although this inscription suggests a comparable division of labour at the Bijapuri atelier, we do not know which portion of the work was



allotted to which artist. A portrait of the sultan's grandson Sikandar, in the Custodia Collection (118), also bears a written attribution to two artists, one of whom is Ibrahim Khan Naqqash.<sup>25</sup> Since the Persian word *naqqash* can mean painter, outliner or decorator, it does not provide further clues about the division of labour among Bijapuri artists. A rhythmically swaying flower in a private collection may also be the work of Haidar Ali or Ibrahim Khan, as the gold background is pricked exactly like the sultan's robe (101).<sup>26</sup>

The most sensitive work to have survived from Muhammad Adil Shah's reign is a large drawing touched with colours and gold depicting the assembled Bijapuri court.<sup>27</sup> The sultan performs religious rites in a large pillared hall before a garlanded sanctuary, which contains a golden box inscribed with the names Allah and Muhammad. Forty-two courtiers and mullahs stand in a ring around the sultan in pious poses. Most hold their hands outstretched, with palms up, in prayer; some say rosaries and one faints away in religious ecstasy.

The golden box is probably a reliquary. The only relic at Bijapur is a hair from the Prophet's beard, enshrined in the *asar mahal* ('relic house'), an immense structure erected by Muhammad Adil Shah. The tall ribbed columns, which flank the sanctuary, and the open

100. (OPPOSITE) *Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah and Ikhlas Khan riding an elephant*  
Signed by Haidar Ali and Ibrahim Khan  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
26.7 × 30.5 cm  
Private collection

101 (RIGHT) *Flower*  
Attributed here to Haidar Ali  
and Ibrahim Khan  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
19.8 × 12 cm  
Private collection



work above the windows in the painting resemble the interior of the *asar mahal*. The rites depicted are probably the ceremonies held periodically during the viewing of the Prophet's hair. The flower-strewn sanctuary may be the small room off the main hall, where the relic is kept, normally closed, but opened during the festival.

An inscription on the open book held by the third figure below Ikhlas Khan, who stands opposite the sultan, states that the painting was executed by the painter Abdul Karim. The figure holding the book may be the painter himself, possibly another Deccani self-portrait.

## NOTES

1. For the history of Bijapur during the mid seventeenth century and the Mughal involvement in the Deccan, see *The Cambridge History of India* vol. IV (Delhi, reprinted 1963), chs 7–10; Varma, chs 8–9; Shyam (1966), chs 7–8.
2. Welch (1976), p. 89.
3. The artistic patronage of at least one Rajput officer serving in the Deccan is documented by an illustrated *Rasamanjari* painted in Aurangabad in 1650 for a Mewar thakur. See pp. 48–50 and (32–33). Doshi, pp. 19–28.
4. By the artists Muhammad Khan (94–96), and Haidar Ali and Ibrahim Khan (100).
5. The *darbar* scene of Muhammad Adil Shah in the City Palace Museum, Jaipur, dated 1651 (pp. 128–30 and (95)) and the paintings in the *Divan* of Urfi, dated 1636 (see p. 130 and n. 9). Welch (1959), figs 22–25.
6. Binney (1973), no. 127.
7. Sotheby's, London, 7 April 1975, lot 109, where it is attributed, erroneously in my opinion, to the Mughal artist Farrukh Beg.
8. The subject is clearly the same man as the figure marked with the Roman numeral 'vi' and identified as Muhammad Adil Shah in the 'group portrait' of the assembled Adil Shahi dynasty in the volume of illustrations to the seventeenth-century Venetian traveller Manucci's *Storia do Mogor* in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Reserve O.D. 45). See Irvine, pl. 34, where the captions are unfortunately reversed; Skelton (1958), p. 105.
9. Muhammad Adil Shah is the royal figure depicted in the double frontispiece of the tiny manuscript of the *Divan* of Urfi, dated 1636. It was written and illustrated under the patronage of Sayyid Nurullah, a prominent Bijapuri nobleman who is depicted facing the sultan on the opposite page of the same manuscript. The Sayyid is also portrayed beneath the sultan's throne, in the lower right-hand corner of the 1651 *darbar* scene in the Jaipur City Palace Museum (95). The *Divan* of Urfi is reproduced in Welch (1959), figs 22–29.
10. I.M. 17.1925. Welch (1963 c), pl. 43.
11. A.G. 765. Previously unpublished.
12. A.G. 771. Previously unpublished.
13. As in the sixteenth-century portrait of the sultan of Ahmadnagar in the State Library, Rampur (5).
14. See Welch (1961), p. 414. Welch also attributed several paintings from the reign of Ali Adil Shah II (1656–72) to this artist. We believe these later works are by a different artist, whom we call the Bombay painter, after his *darbar* scene in the collection of the late Dr Moti Chandra (p. 139 and (107)).
15. I am grateful to Chahryar Adle, Simon Digby and A.H. Morton for contributing to the translation of this important inscription. For the *shuhur* era, see Prinsep, pp. 168–74. To change a *shuhur* date into the Christian calendar, add 599.
16. See pp. 69–70.
17. Portraits of the same man, inscribed Ikhlas Khan, are in two Golconda albums in the British Library (Or. 7964, fol. 26a and Sloane 5254, fol. 34a).
18. Binney (1973), no. 133.
19. Falk and Archer, no. 409.
20. 1937 4–10 04. Gray (1938) fig. D; Barrett (1958), pl. 9.
21. Falk and Archer, no. 405.
22. Welch (1959), p. 145, n. 63. Welch considered this painting to be eighteenth century. See also n. 9 (above).
23. Private collection. Sotheby's, London, 11 April 1961, lot 40. Pinder-Wilson (1976), no. 179.
24. Staude (1933–34), pp. 2 ff., Staude (1955), pp. 85 ff.
25. See pp. 149–50.
26. Pinder-Wilson (1976), no. 177 (not reproduced). The study of a flower in the Keir Collection may also have been painted at Bijapur, possibly during the second half of the seventeenth century. Skelton (1976), v. 99.
27. Private collection. Unfortunately it cannot be published at the present time.

## APPENDIX: *Marbled drawings*

In 1912, F.R. Martin published three marbled drawings, attributing them to Ottoman Turkey.<sup>1</sup> They were a *Cow and calf*, in Martin's own collection, an *Ascetic riding a nag*, then in the collection of Sir Charles Reed, London, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library (106),<sup>2</sup> and a *Nag*, formerly in the Victor Goloubew Collection, Paris, now in the Boston Museum.<sup>3</sup>

He suggested that the technique of marbling had originated in Tabriz, at least as early as the fifteenth century, from where it was introduced into Turkey in the sixteenth century. According to him, the 'colours must have been applied

while the paper was wet, since the paper is completely saturated with them'. He mentions the harmonious effects of brilliant, marvellously varied colours, 'the outlines . . . enhanced by gold lines drawn by a hand that even the greatest European decorator would have envied', the respect Turkish connoisseurs had for this very expensive kind of coloured paper and its extreme rarity, so sought after that few orientals were willing to part with it.<sup>4</sup>

Since Martin's day, our knowledge of marbled paper has not substantially increased. It does seem to have originated in the East. An early



102. *Dervish and pet cat*  
Marbled paper drawing  
Inscribed on the reverse: 'Shaykh Muhammad Zakar Ujala Shah'  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, XXIX/174



103. *Kneeling dervish*  
Marbled paper drawing  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
16.5 x 12 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection,  
San Diego





104. (ABOVE) *Starving horse harassed by birds*  
Marbled paper drawing  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
13.4 × 16.7 cm  
Private collection



105. (LEFT) *Ascetic riding a nag*  
Marbled paper drawing  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
Metropolitan Museum of Art,  
New York, 1944. 44.154.  
Purchased by the Rogers Fund

106. (OPPOSITE) *Ascetic riding a nag*  
Marbled paper drawing  
Bijapur, mid seventeenth century  
11.5 × 16.5 cm  
Pierpont Morgan Library,  
New York, M.458, fol. 30b

description of the technique was made by Lord Bacon in *Sylva sylvarum* (1627):

The Turks . . . have a pretty art of chamoletting of paper, which is not with us in use. They take divers oyled colours and put them severally (in drops) upon water; and stirre the water lightly, and then wet thin paper with it, and the paper will be waved, and veined, like chamolet or marble.<sup>5</sup>

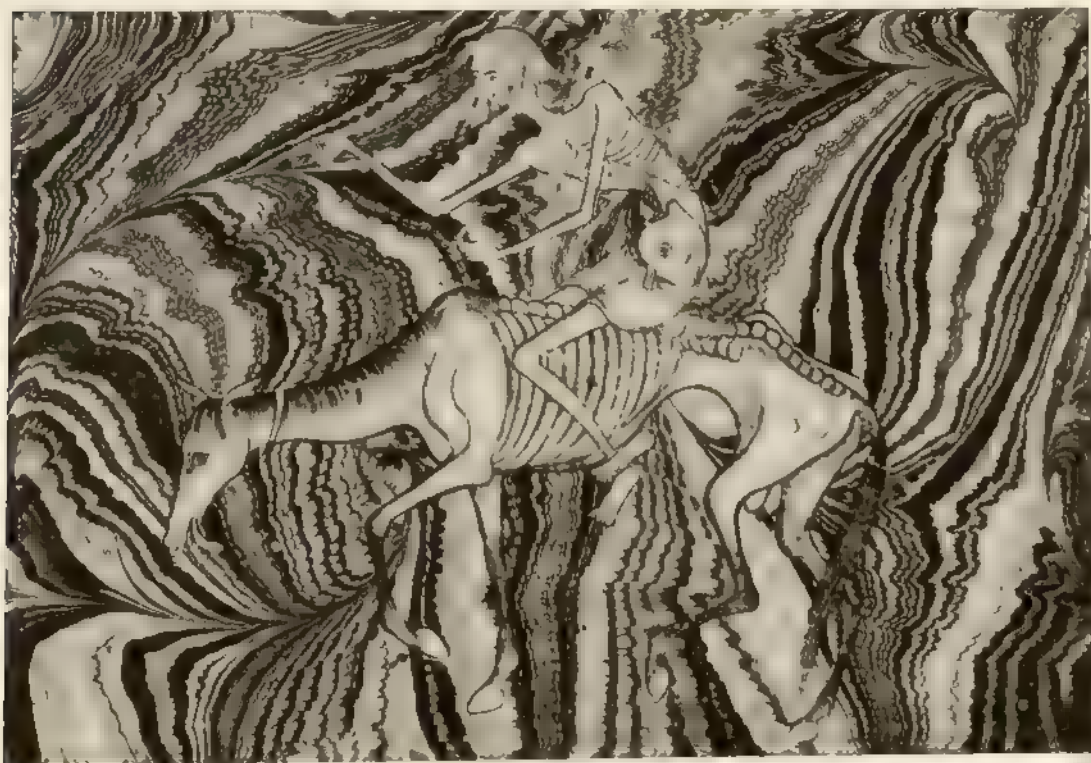
Despite both Lord Bacon's and Martin's references to Turkey, there is increasing evidence that many of the surviving marbled drawings were executed, not in Iran or Turkey, but in the Deccan. Some of the best pages are either in Deccani collections (102),<sup>6</sup> or were acquired in the Deccan (103). Where human figures occur, their faces and costumes are distinctly Bijapuri, especially close to paintings from the latter part of the reign of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1579–1627) and his successor Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah (1627–56). The mauve, blue and yellow clouds of many Deccani paintings, often painted in swirling, turbulent patterns, imitate the effects of marbled paper, as in the *Deer hunt*, executed at Bijapur during the third quarter of the seventeenth century (115). Finally, the

marbled paper which was often used in Deccani manuscripts for end papers<sup>7</sup> and as decorative margins for paintings (62, 90), seems to be of the same variety as the marbled drawings.

The *Dervish and pet cat* (102) in the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, is probably Bijapuri, dating from the mid seventeenth century, like the other works discussed here.<sup>8</sup> An inscription on the reverse identifies the saint as Shaykh Muhammad Zakar Ujala Shah. He has the same wild mood and shaded face as the *Begum* in the Mittal Museum, Hyderabad.<sup>6</sup> Both are by the same workshop or hand. His pose also recalls the *Crouching dervish* in the Metropolitan Museum (68).

Another marbled dervish, in the Binney Collection, is more restrained (103).<sup>9</sup> Inscribed 'Hafiz of Shiraz', an unlikely identification, his meditative mood recalls the *Kneeling dervish* in the Gulshan album, Teheran (60), while his long black hair and heavily modelled, almost European, features resemble the *Ascetic visited by a yogini* in Berlin (86 and col. pl. xiv), which may depict the same Deccani saint.

Starving horses were also favoured themes for marbled-paper craftsmen. Martin thinks they are derived from European engravings depicting



Death,<sup>10</sup> while Schimmel believes they symbolize the baser instincts within man which the mystic must 'starve' to attain enlightenment.<sup>11</sup> In a *Starving horse harrassed by birds* (104), in a private collection, blood drips from marbled wounds between golden ribs, combining preciousness and pathos in the intensely poignant way that is typical of Deccani taste.<sup>12</sup> Two similar horses,

supporting starving riders, were probably executed with the same pounce or stencil. One, in the Metropolitan Museum, New York, is marbled only on the animal's body (105).<sup>13</sup> The other, originally published by Martin,<sup>1</sup> now in the Pierpont Morgan Library,<sup>2</sup> is reversed, the marbling restricted to the background, producing an image of hallucinatory intensity (106).<sup>14</sup>

## NOTES

1. Martin, pl. 231.
2. M. 458, fol. 30b. 11.5 × 16.5 cm.
3. 14.695. Signed by an artist named Arab. Reproduced, along with a marbled figure of a bishop (Boston Museum, 14.697), in Coomaraswamy (1929), pl. LXV.
4. Martin, pp. 93-94, 106-8.
5. Quoted in Hewitt-Bates and Halliday, pp. 3-4. I am indebted to Hans Schmoller for bringing this article to my attention and for discussing the technique of marbling with me.
6. Welch (1976), no. 35.
7. As in the Bijapuri *Divan* of Urfi, dated 1636. See p. 130.
8. XXIX/174.
9. Binney (1973), no. 128.
10. Martin, p. 93.
11. Schimmel (1975), pp. 112-13, and in her courses on

Islamic poetic symbolism at Harvard University.

12. Welch (1976), no. 34.
13. Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, 1944, 44. 154. Purchased by the Rogers Fund.
14. Other marbled drawings, probably from the Deccan, include a *Man chasing horses*, signed Shafi, in a private collection; a similar scene, mirror reversed, where a hunter wears a distinctly Deccani turban, formerly in the Kevorkian Collection, New York (Sotheby's, London, 1 December 1969, lot 111); a *Lady praying before a huge plant*, the lady's face heavily shaded in Deccani style, in the Binney Collection; a *Bishop* in the Boston Museum (Coomaraswamy (1929), pl. LXV); a *Tiger eating a gazelle* in the Binney Collection (Binney (1973), no. 129); and a *European lady in a church* (?), in the State Museum, Hyderabad (photograph shown to me by Hans Schmoller).



# Sultans Ali Adil Shah II (1656–72) and Sikandar (1672–86) Bijapuri

THE SYNTHESIS of Mughal and Deccani taste, which began during the reign of Muhammad Adil Shah (1627–56), found new direction under the patronage of his successors, Ali and Sikandar. Portraits continue to be the rule; figures are shown smoking *huggas*, smelling flowers or reading scrolls. The main difference is that line casts off Mughal formality, becoming lively and playful, with a typically Deccani swing. Eyes sweep gracefully upwards, as in eighteenth-century Kishangarh paintings.<sup>1</sup> Rich glowing colours reappear. Gestures and glances exchanged among figures establish a psychological coherence often lacking in contemporary Mughal group portraits. As Bijapur reeled under civil war and Mughal aggression, the arts attained a new brilliance, contradicting the established view that painting swiftly declined after the death of their great patron, Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1627).<sup>2</sup>

One of the most lyrical paintings of the period is the portrait of Sultan Ali Adil Shah II and courtiers, in the collection of the late Dr Moti Chandra, Bombay (107).<sup>3</sup> Unlike the Mughal emperors, surrounded by crowds of courtiers stiffly standing to attention in glittering halls, Ali holds court from a bed, quite relaxed, comfortably smoking his bidri *hugga*. Although there is an attempt at characterization, as a result of Mughal influence, the real impact of the page lies in its splendid design – dominated by the rippling shape of the sultan – and its rich palette of green, blue, yellow and maroon.

Although the portrait is uninscribed, the sultan's identity is hardly open to question. Inscribed portraits of Ali exist, both from Bijapur (111), and in several Golconda albums of the 1680s.<sup>4</sup> Here he appears as a young man in his twenties. Since he was born in either 1632 or 1637, a date of 1660 is possible, when the sultan was either twenty-three or twenty-eight.

The courtier holding the illegible scroll to the right of the sultan is a Hindu, as he wears a large orange *tilak* on his forehead. The only important Hindus at court were the Maratha chief, Shahji, and his renegade son, Shivaji. Shahji had won favour by conquering vast areas of the Karnatik for the king. While he was off in the South, however, Shivaji was busy amassing territory for himself in the northern part of the kingdom. Attempts were made to stop Shivaji, including imprisoning his father, but nothing worked. Shivaji bribed each general sent against him and murdered the last one, Afzal Khan, in 1659. Finally, Shahji arranged an armistice between Ali and his son in 1661, which lasted until 1664. This painting may symbolize the reconciliation of the three men. The nobleman with the scroll may be Shivaji, holding Ali's *farman* pardoning him for past offences.<sup>5</sup>





107. *Darbar of Sultan Ali Adil Shah II*  
Attributed here to the  
Bombay painter  
Bijapur, c. 1660  
18.7 × 17.4 cm  
The late Dr Moti Chandra  
Collection, Bombay

A superb portrait of Ali, in the Barber Institute, Birmingham, is by the same artist, whom we can call the Bombay painter (108–9).<sup>6</sup> The sultan wears a splendid gold *jama* decorated with emerald-green peacock 'eyes', identical to the textile covering the bolster in the Bombay portrait. He appears at a window, a frequent Bijapur setting, holding a large polished ruby, surrounded by sumptuous arabesque. The palette of blue, green and gold, the massive torso bursting with energy, and the bold, sweeping lines produce an effulgent icon of royal splendour.

A portrait of Ali aiming an arrow at a tiger, in a private collection, is also by the Bombay painter (110).<sup>7</sup> The sultan's pose recalls ancient Middle-Eastern stone friezes of kings slaughtering lions, a symbolic act of royal power. The sultan's radiant face, sparkling lapis-lazuli turban and tooled gold *jama* give the same jewel-like effect as the Birmingham picture. The painting is torn at the bottom and probably lacks about a third of its original surface. Curving up beneath the bow is the golden tail of a missing mythological beast, probably a griffin, upon which Ali originally stood, enhancing his symbolic rôle.

A large portrait of Ali, in three-quarter profile, nearly life size, is in an identical style (111).<sup>8</sup> In the tradition of the late sixteenth-century portrait of Ibrahim Adil Shah II (49 and



109. Detail of 108

108. *Sultan Ali Adil Shah II*  
Attributed here to the Bombay painter  
Bijapur, c. 1660  
38.5 × 23 cm  
Barber Institute, Birmingham, England, B.12

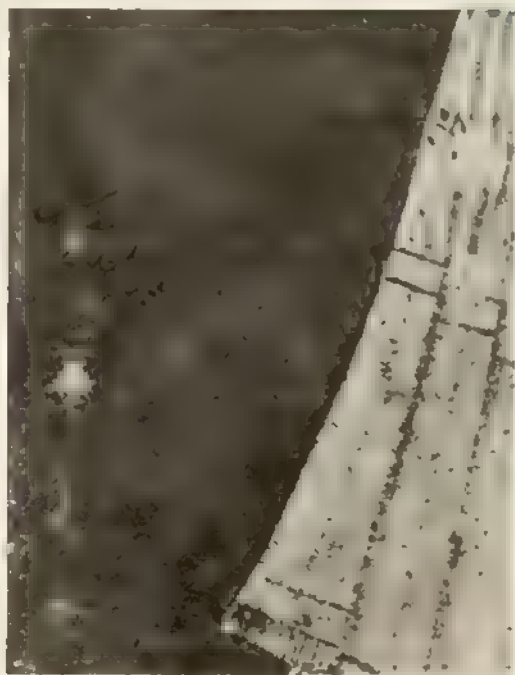




110. (ABOVE) *Sultan Ali Adil Shah II*  
aiming an arrow at a tiger  
Attributed here to the Bombay painter  
Bijapur, c. 1660  
21.7 × 31.6 cm  
Private collection

111. (RIGHT) *Sultan Ali Adil Shah II*  
Painting on cloth, remounted on paper  
at Kishangarh, Rajasthan  
Attributed here to the Bombay painter  
Inscribed: 'Ali Adil Shah, emperor  
of Bijapur'  
Bijapur, c. 1660  
24 × 21 cm  
Private collection





112. (LEFT) *Courtesan holding betel leaves*  
Attributed here to the Bombay painter  
Inscribed *abdul hamid naqqash* or *amal-i*  
(‘work of’) *muhammad naqqash*  
Bijapur, c. 1660  
14.7 × 9 cm  
Musée Guimet, Paris, M.A. 1029

113. (ABOVE) Detail of 112  
The inscription: *abdul hamid*  
*naqqash* or *amal-i muhammad naqqash*

col. pl. vi), it differs in its more formal mood, typical of later Deccani painting. Although we miss the earthy intimacy of the earlier page, immaculate draughtsmanship and beautifully proportioned abstract shapes, composing the sultan’s face, compensate. The portrait was executed on paper, then cut out of its original setting and laid down on cloth. This must have been done at Kishangarh in Rajasthan, for the border, inscribed with the sultan’s name in Persian and *devanagari* script, is typical of that school.

A courtesan depicted against a dark-green background, wearing gold pyjamas, a transparent robe and a gauzy pink veil, by the same hand, is in the Musée Guimet (112).<sup>9</sup> To the right of her veil, a small, badly rubbed Persian inscription gives the name of the artist (113). Unfortunately, it is difficult to decipher, perhaps either *abdul hamid naqqash* (‘Abdul Hamid, the painter’), or *amal-i muhammad naqqash* (‘The work of Muhammad, the painter’). As this artist is the Bombay painter, the inscription is crucial for establishing his identity.

A sixth painting attributable to the same hand is the portrait of Muhammad Hashim, the son of Sultan Ali Adil Shah, in the Keir Collection (114).<sup>10</sup> He is portrayed as a young man, his beard not fully grown. If he is twenty, then his father, who was born in 1632 or 1637 would theoretically have to be nearly forty, placing the date of the portrait c. 1672–77. As Ali died in 1672, it may have been painted during the early years of the reign of Sikandar Adil Shah, Muhammad Hashim's brother. Other works by the Bombay painter are in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR) and the India Office Library, London.<sup>11</sup>

If any Bijapuri painting of the late seventeenth century evokes, even in part, the poetry of work done for Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1579–1627), it must be the *Deer hunt*, formerly in the Pozzi Collection, Paris (115).<sup>12</sup> Two princes, one dressed in mauve riding a white horse (116), the other in maroon on a blue stallion, lead a group of hunters, wearing typical Bijapuri



114. Prince Muhammad Hashim,  
son of Sultan Ali Adil Shah II  
Attributed here to the Bombay painter  
Byapur, c. 1670–80  
19.1 × 10.6 cm  
Keir Collection, London





xvii. *Sultans of the Adil Shahi dynasty*  
Signed by Kamal Muhammad and Chand  
Muhammad  
Bijapur, c.1680

41.3 x 30.9cm  
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
See p 150 and black and white illustration 118a





xviii. *Composite horse*

Golconda, early seventeenth century

21.1 × 27.9cm

Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR)

See p. 170 and black and white illustration 135



115. (ABOVE) *Deer hunt*  
 Bijapur, c. 1660–70  
 24 × 45 cm  
 Private collection

116. (RIGHT) Detail of 115

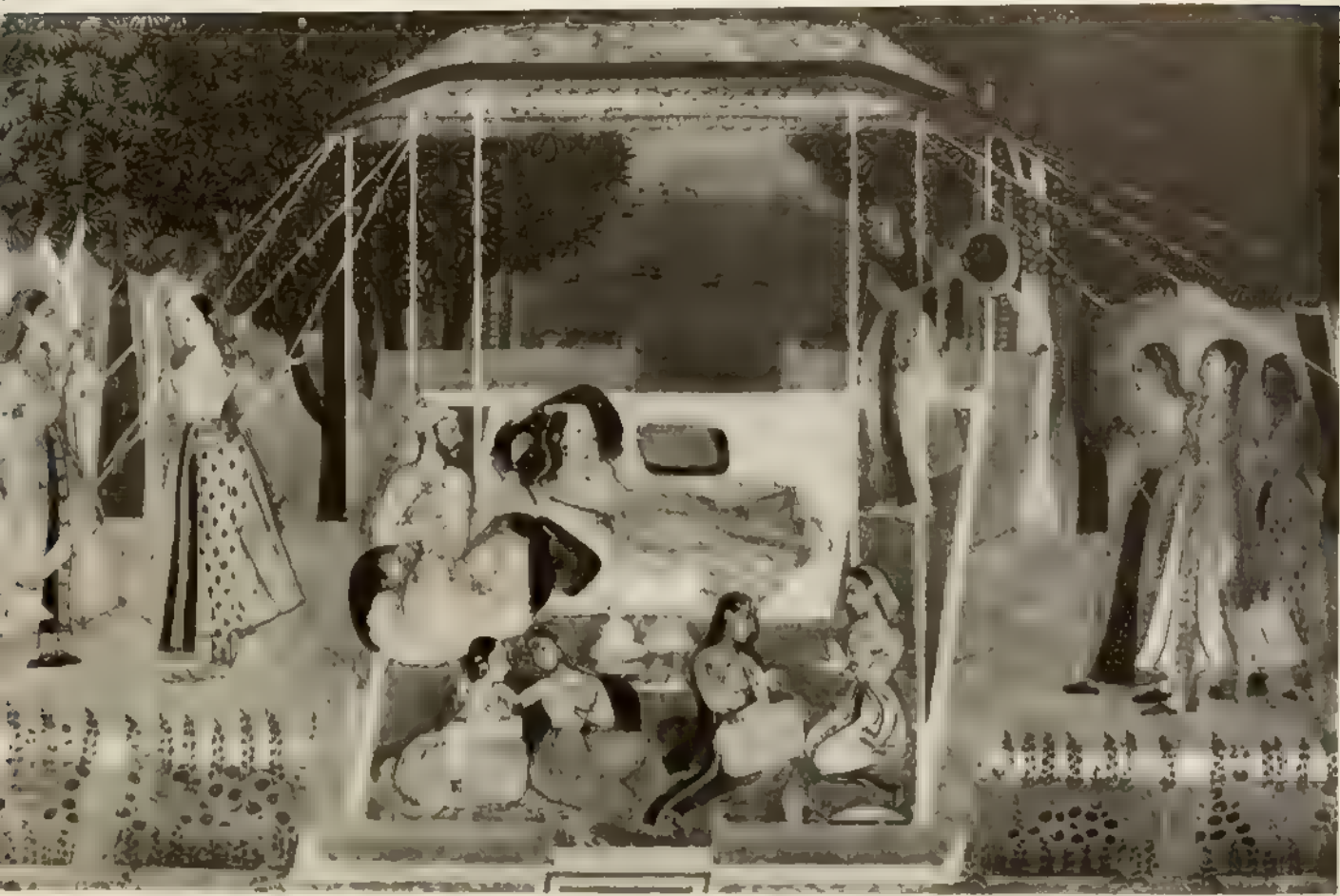


costume, towards a herd of deer. The animals bolt, panic-stricken, while the two hunters move inexorably forward, expressionless, like beautiful machines of destruction. On the horizon, sombre trees frame the meadow with chilling precision, and twisted clouds, like marbled paper, announce a storm.

An unfinished painting of *Sultan Ali Adil Shah II with a courtesan*, set in a garden, was executed by a closely related artist (117 and col. pl. xvi). This enchanting picture of youth, luxury and cultivated leisure, fresh as a spring flower, denies both sensuality and the threatening passage of time. Ali holds the arm of his lover, drowsy with wine and heat, while







beautiful servants serenade them. The figure of the prince, as well as the mauve terrace and green meadow, still await the finishing touches of the artist. Other parts of the picture, however, are highly finished, like the mango trees simultaneously budding, flowering and bearing fruit. Eighteenth-century Hyderabad paintings exist which are more formal, though still charming, versions of this lively picture (225-26).

Painting under Sikandar Adil Shah, who ascended the throne at the age of four and was deposed by the Mughals at eighteen, shows no major differences from the preceding reign. Considering the tender age of the sultan, the frequent Mughal invasions and the constant civil war, it is remarkable that painting continued at all. Perhaps the great nobles, who were becoming increasingly independent at their *jagirs*, began to rival the sultan in employing artists. It is significant that the group of Bijapuri paintings which eventually found its way to the royal Bikaner library was captured, not from the fort at Bijapur, but from the fortress of Adoni, the *jagir* of the former African regent, Siddi Masud. It is quite possible that he not only collected art, but also founded a school of painting at Adoni, which would have been in a variant of the Bijapuri style.

No paintings have yet been linked to Adoni, but eighteenth-century work at nearby Kurnool (211, 214), which one might expect to imitate the metropolitan styles of Hyderabad,



117. (OPPOSITE) *Sultan Ali Adil Shah II with a courtesan*

Bijapur, c. 1660–70

20.6 × 31 cm

Private collection

See col. pl. XVI on p. 120

118. (RIGHT) *Sultan Sikandar Adil Shah fanned by a page*

Signed by Abdul Qadir and Ibrahim Khan

Bijapur, c. 1680

18 × 11.7 cm

Custodia Foundation, Paris, 1973–T. 14

echoes instead *darbar* scenes from the reigns of Muhammad and Ali Adil Shah. Artists' families from Adoni may well have gone to work for the nawab of Kurnool when he established his short-lived court in the eighteenth century.<sup>13</sup>

The portrait of a delicate, dark-skinned boy, in the collection of the Custodia Foundation, Paris, probably dates from Sikandar's reign (118).<sup>14</sup> It has been catalogued as a portrait of the young Ali Adil Shah, before he became sultan, about 1650. However, neither the style of the painting nor the costumes in it are those of the reign of Muhammad Adil Shah (1627–56). Instead the style resembles the portraits of Ali Adil Shah we have just examined, although lacking their bold lines. Since the young boy's jewelled turban with aigrette suggests that he is a king, and the only child-king ruling at this time in the Deccan was Sikandar, the portrait must depict him. Moreover, he strongly resembles the dark boy inscribed with the name Sikandar, in the group portrait of the Adil Shahi dynasty painted for the Venetian adventurer Manucci to illustrate his memoirs.<sup>15</sup> Since Sikandar was born in 1668, and appears to be about twelve in the portrait, the portrait may have been painted about 1680.

On the carpet, to the right of the arabesque, a Persian inscription attributes the painting to two artists: *amal-i abdul qadir wa ibrahim khan naqqash* ('the work of Abdul Qadir and the painter [or designer] Ibrahim Khan'). The inscription seems to be contemporary with the

painting and is in a good *nastaliq* hand. It raises, but does not solve, the same problem, concerning the division of labour within the Bijapuri atelier, as the double inscription on the portrait of *Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah and Ikhlas Khan riding an elephant* (100). The name Ibrahim Khan Naqqash also appears second in that inscription.

A portrait of a warrior riding at full gallop on a chestnut-brown horse, accompanied by two attendants, in a private collection, is probably by the same artist or artists. The Hindi inscription on the reverse states that the picture is a 'portrait of Haidar Shah, father of Latif Shah', that it was taken from the fortress of Adoni and checked into the Bikaner Palace Library in 1748 samvat/1691 AD.<sup>16</sup>

The finest painting which has so far come to light from Sikandar's reign is the *Sultans of the Adil Shahi dynasty*, recently acquired by the Metropolitan Museum, New York (118a and col. pl. xvii). Although genealogical paintings, emphasizing the ruling family's legitimacy and distinguished lineage, are known from Mughal India, the most important being the *Emperors and princes of the house of Timur* in the British Museum, this is the first unquestionably royal example from the Deccan.<sup>17</sup> The patron was certainly the last sultan of Bijapur, Sikandar Adil Shah, who is shown at the extreme right as a child of ten or twelve, dark skinned, closely resembling the portrait in the Custodia Foundation, Paris (118). Since Sikandar was born in 1668, this remarkably large painting can be similarly dated to about 1680 or perhaps a few years earlier.

In the centre, Yusuf, the founder of the dynasty, seated upon a splendid gilded throne, receives a golden key, symbol of kingship, from a standing figure who appears to be a Persian, as he wears a modified Safavid turban. The Deccani kingdoms were proud of their Shia faith, which they shared with Safavid Iran, and acknowledged the suzerainty of the Safavid shahs in open defiance of the Sunni Mughal emperors. In fact the sultans of Bijapur had received the royal title of 'shah' from Shah Ismail of Iran in 1519, an act of great cultural importance for the dynasty.<sup>18</sup> This painting commemorates that event as well as the controversial Iranian bond. Although the inscription at the top of the page, probably later and erroneous, identifies the standing figure as Shah Abbas, padshah (emperor) of Iran (1587-1629), he is more likely to be either Shah Ismail (1502-24) or the sufi ancestor of the Safavid line, Shaykh Safi Ardabili, source of royal and religious legitimacy in the Shia world.<sup>19</sup>

To the left of Sultan Yusuf (1489-1509) are, from right to left, Sultans Ismail (1509-34), Ibrahim I (1534-57) and Ali I (1557-79), while on the right are, from left to right, Sultans Ibrahim II (1579-1627), Muhammad (1627-56), Ali II (1656-72) and Sikandar (1672-86).<sup>20</sup> The stateliness of the royal figures is in remarkable contrast to the ecstatic setting. The golden arabesque of the blue-ground textile, perhaps a seventeenth-century Bijapuri carpet, swirls with wild abandon round the sultans' feet, punctuated by the firmer rhythms of the medalion and the borders. Beyond this royal assembly, surreal mauve cliffs support domed shrines and feathery trees above a silver sea, descendants of the fantasies of fifteenth-century Turkman and early Bijapur art (69 and col. pl. ix). On the left, an inscription gives the name of two artists, Kamal Muhammad and Chand Muhammad.<sup>21</sup>

The royal Bijapur school of painting ended abruptly in 1686 when the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, after seventeen bitter months of siege, captured the city and its sultan. The kingdom's downfall had been hastened by a terrible famine, then raging in the Deccan due to the failure of the rains, which greatly increased the sufferings of the besieged. Aurangzeb entered the Adil Shahi palace and the *asar mahal* ('relic house') and destroyed all painting





118a. *Sultans of the Adil Shahi dynasty*

Signed by Kamal Muhammad and  
Chand Muhammad

Bijapur, c. 1680

41.3 × 30.9 cm

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York

Sultan Yusuf Adil Shah, founder of the dynasty, sits

enthroned in the centre receiving the key of royal  
authority from a Persian. On the left are seated  
Sultans Ismail, Ibrahim I and Ali I, and on the right  
Sultans Ibrahim II, Muhammad, Ali II and Sikandar.  
Erroneously inscribed at top: 'Shah Abbas,  
emperor of Iran.'

See col. pl. xvii on p. 145

drawn in violation of Qoranic law and all Shia inscriptions. Sikandar Adil Shah was enrolled among the Mughal nobles with the lesser title of khan, and was carried about in the emperor's camp until he died in 1700, at the age of thirty-two. Two years after the conquest, bubonic plague swept the city, killing half its population. The great capital sank to the level of a small provincial town, dwarfed by the grandeur of its ruins, and remains so today. In 1890, two hundred years after the catastrophe, the Englishman Henry Cousens described the empty city as 'a lonely and deserted extent of ruins, the haunt of the jackal, the wolf and the hyaena, and an elysium of bats and owls'.<sup>22</sup>

## NOTES

1. For the Kishangarh school, see Dickinson and Khandalavala, and Randhawa and Randhawa. It is possible that Bijapuri artists emigrated to Kishangarh after the fall of Bijapur in 1686. The existence of several late seventeenth-century Bijapur paintings with Kishangarh mounts, including the portrait of Ali Adil Shah II (111), suggests that the Royal Kishangarh Collection was especially rich in them. They may have influenced Kishangarh artists, providing the origin for the 'Kishangarh eye'. See also p.213 and (185).
2. Barrett (1958), p. 24.
3. Barrett (1960), pl. on p. 8.
4. Inscribed portraits of Ali Adil Shah II are in the following albums:
  1. The Witsen album, fol. 41, Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam. Described: Goetz (1958), p. 38.
  2. The Manucci album, fol. 38, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Reserve O.D. 45. Reproduced: Irvine, pl. 34.
  3. British Library, London, Or. 22.282, fol. 13.
  4. British Library, London, Sloane 5254, fol. 35a.
5. The figure resembles late seventeenth-century portraits of Shivaji from two Golconda albums. One is in the Musée Guimet, Paris, (Stchoukine (1929a), no. 91); the other is in the British Library, London, Or. 22.282, fol. 12.
6. B. 12. Previously unpublished. Although the Persian inscription identifies the subject as Ibrahim Adil Shah II, the face is Ali's. Perhaps the painter gave Ali's features to Ibrahim as a compliment to the reigning monarch.
7. Christie's, London, 24 April 1980, lot 55.
8. Private collection. Previously unpublished.
9. M.A. 1029. Previously unpublished.
10. Welch (1959), fig. 30; Skelton (1976), v. 101.
11. F. 4589, fol. 29 and Falk and Archer, no. 411. Related portraits are in the Mittal Museum, Hyderabad; the late Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection, Bombay (Khandalavala and Chandra (1965), col. pl. 1); the Binney Collection, San Diego (Soustiel and David (1974), no. 26); and the late Dr Moti Chandra Collection, Bombay.
12. Private collection. Welch (1973), no. 78; Soustiel and David (1970), no. 49.
13. See also pp. 237-41.
14. 1973-T. 14. Custodia Foundation, pl. 72.
15. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, Reserve O.D. 45. Irvine, pl. 34.
16. This painting cannot be reproduced at present.
17. The group portrait of the Adil Shahi dynasty, which Manucci had painted by bazaar level Golconda artists in the late seventeenth century as one of the illustrations for his memoirs, now in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, is a coarse version of this picture, without its rich textiles, sensitive portraits and fantastic landscape (Irvine, pl. 34). A third stereotyped version is in Vienna (Strzygowski, Kramrisch and Wellesz, abb. 37).
18. See p. 60.
19. I am grateful to Simon Digby for suggesting Shaykh Safi Ardabili.
20. Mallu Adil Shah who ruled briefly in 1534 is missing. There are several mistakes in the identification of the figures in the Bibliothèque Nationale version, where on the left of Yusuf the figures are labelled, from right to left, Ashraf, Ibrahim and Muhammad and on the right, from left to right, Ali, Muhammad, Ali and Sikandar.
21. The latter artist is known from a signed portrait of Ikhlas Khan, the African prime minister of Sultan Muhammad Adil Shah (1627-56), in the India Office Library, London (Falk and Archer, no. 404).
22. Cousens (1890), p. 1.

## Iranian traditions at Golconda (1512–80)

### *The historical background*

**A**N IMPORTANT FACTOR in understanding the Persianate character of Golconda painting is the foreign origin of the ruling dynasty, the Qutb Shahis. The founder of the line, Sultan Quli, was a Black Sheep (Qara Qoyunlu) Turkman prince who emigrated from western Iran to Bidar, the Deccan capital of the Bahmanids, in 1478.<sup>1</sup> He found favour at court and soon became an important nobleman with vast political power. After the disintegration of central authority, he secured the whole of the province of Telingana as a personal fief. In 1512, he formally renounced his ties with the Bahmanids, founding the Qutb Shahi dynasty which ruled from Golconda, and later nearby Hyderabad, until the Mughal conquest of 1687.<sup>2</sup>

Sultan Quli was the great, great grandson of Iskandar, elder brother of Jahanshah, the Black Sheep Turkman prince who became ruler of Baghdad, Oman and nearly all of Iran in the mid-fifteenth century. The Black Sheep were zealous Shias and were therefore bitter enemies of the White Sheep Turkmans (Aq Qoyunlu) and the Timurids of Herat, both Sunni.<sup>3</sup> In 1467, the White Sheep clan decisively defeated the Black Sheep and took over their empire, which they had ruled from Tabriz. The Black Sheep princes were relentlessly hunted down and executed by their conquerors; the fear of total extermination compelled Sultan Quli and his followers to seek their fortunes in India. After establishing Shiism at Golconda, he boasted that his family, not the Safavids, had inaugurated the first Shia kingdom, since his ancestors had fought for their religion from the late fourteenth century, while the Safavids had only achieved political prominence in the sixteenth.

Qutb Shahi culture was partly based on the Shia cultural patterns of fifteenth-century Turkman Iran, a heritage which the mightier Safavids also shared. In 1526, Babur, a Central Asian Turkish prince and descendant of Timur, established the Sunni Mughal empire of northern India, which emerged in the later sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as the common enemy of both Safavids and Deccanis. The Qutb Shahis regarded the Mughals as latecomers and never willingly submitted to their claims of suzerainty over the Deccan. They saw the developing Shia-Sunni rivalry in India as the continuation of their ancestors' heroic struggle against the Timurids.

They established close cultural and political links with the Safavids, patronized poets and painters from Iran and even intermarried with the Safavid royal house. Moreover, the titular authority of the Iranian shah over the Deccan was acknowledged, as he was the greatest Shia prince of the period. His name was pronounced in the *khutba* (Friday sermon) in all the





mosques of the kingdom until 1636, when Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah was forced by Shah Jahan to substitute the name of the Mughal emperor.<sup>4</sup>

Considering the Qutb Shahis' fidelity to their Turkman heritage, it is possible that the roots of the Golconda school of painting also lie in the art of fifteenth-century Tabriz and Baghdad. Unfortunately, the painting which the Black Sheep Turkman princes patronized there is as mysterious as the Deccani schools. Little has been written on the subject, and most of the great fifteenth-century illustrated manuscripts have been assigned a Timurid provenance. However, the most powerful Black Sheep prince of the century, Jahanshah (1436–67) may emerge as an important patron of the arts. He had the material resources of a vast empire and the necessary artistic temperament, having been a poet in both Turkish and Persian.

Robinson has recently assigned several important fifteenth-century works to the patronage of Sultan Pir Budaq, Jahanshah's rebellious son, who ruled Baghdad in his father's name as governor from 1460 to 1465.<sup>5</sup> These works include two *Nizamis* – one in the West Berlin Library,<sup>6</sup> the other in the Royal Asiatic Society, London<sup>7</sup> – and the splendid *Kalila wa dimna* in Teheran.<sup>8</sup> Robinson's theories on Turkman painting may produce a major reassessment of fifteenth-century Turco-Iranian art, with considerable repercussions for our understanding of Deccani painting.

The most brilliant artist to have worked on these manuscripts, whom Robinson calls the Gulistan painter, is also responsible for the single miniature depicting the Prophet and his Companions, in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares.<sup>9</sup> He paints huge spiky vegetation, large-scale human figures with European-looking faces and heavily shaded draperies. These traits emerge more than a century later in Deccani painting. Unfortunately, the missing links of the sixteenth century, showing the progressive Indianization of Turkman taste, have not yet come to light. Such transitional paintings probably do exist but are masquerading under erroneous attributions.

Some Qara Qoyunlu artists probably continued working at Tabriz after the sudden Aq Qoyunlu capture of the city in 1467. Sultan Yakub Beg (1478–90) became an important patron of the arts. His most important artists may have been Shaykhi, Darvish Muhammad and Muhammad Siyah Qalam; the latter two names perhaps referring to the same man. The finest surviving works by these painters are the Istanbul *Nizami*<sup>10</sup> and the group of drawings and paintings bound up in the Fateh albums, also in the Topkapi Saray, Istanbul.<sup>11</sup>

These fantastic depictions of demons, dervishes and mythological beasts have much in common with late sixteenth and early seventeenth-century Deccani art. A comparison of the *Ascetic visited by a yogini* in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR) (86 and col. pl. xiv), with fol. 146b of the Topkapi album H.2153 (87), reveals startling similarities in composition, motifs and spirit. The lions, the centrally placed tree, the division of the picture space into superimposed bands and the burgeoning plants of the Deccani picture have obvious prototypes in the Istanbul page. Similarly, the Deccani *Crouching dervish*, in the Metropolitan Museum (68), recalls the grotesque crouching figures of the Topkapi albums, possibly derived from Central Asian shamanistic imagery.

Welch has long maintained that Turkman artists migrated from Tabriz to the Deccan, carrying with them the tools of their trade: pigments, brushes, sketches and pounces.<sup>12</sup> These artists may have travelled with their patrons, the Black Sheep princes, who settled in the Deccan in the 1470s. Such a migration would explain the earthy Turkman fantasies of Deccani art, so different from the classical restraint of the Mughal school.

### *The character of Golconda painting*

Although Golconda painting is less rare than Ahmadnagar work, the character of the school remains even more mysterious. Only a fragmentary portion of the original corpus has survived, the rest having fallen the victim of political turbulence during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Moreover, the Golconda works which have emerged are isolated peaks of achievement, bearing little stylistic relation to one another. Therefore, except for the second half of the seventeenth century, it is still impossible to establish the broad developments in taste at Golconda as is now possible for Bijapur and Ahmadnagar.

It seems that the royal Golconda atelier attracted artists from all over India and the Islamic world, not only during the formative stages of the school, but right up to the Mughal conquest in 1687. These artists continued working in Deccani variants of their original idioms, encouraged by the Qutb Shahis' thirst for exotic diversity. Compared to other Deccani centres, Golconda retained a heterogeneous style, preserving subcurrents of almost pure Ottoman, Safavid, Mughal and Bijapuri modes.

A local flavour inevitably developed of course. Both native and foreign artists must have often painted side by side, influencing each other's work. And they must have used, in the main, locally available pigments, so that it is not uncommon to see Persian-style paintings executed in glowing Deccani colours. Most Golconda work, regardless of its original source, has a tense opulence that is quite different from the poignant romanticism of Bijapur or the refined dignity of Ahmadnagar portraiture. Ornament and figural compositions have a dense, almost pulsating vitality that is fundamentally un-Persian. Instead we are reminded of the strong rhythms of the Indian dance, the heavily carved façades of Hindu temples and the lush vegetation of South Indian ornament. In short, despite Persianate taste, an underlying Indian sensibility is always apparent.

### *Sultan Quli (1512–43) and Ibrahim Qutb Shah (1550–80)*

No figural paintings have yet come to light from Sultan Quli's reign. However, a sumptuously illuminated Qoran in two volumes in the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, dated 943AH/1536–37AD, may have been produced for him.<sup>13</sup> Its ornament resembles that of later illuminated manuscripts known to be from Golconda. The density and vitality of its arabesque are foreign to metropolitan Persian styles, and the strong colours, inky blue, lilac-pink and salmon-red, are typical of Deccani taste, probably determined by locally available pigments.

Sultan Ibrahim may have been the first Golconda patron of miniature painting. Much of it was executed by Turco-Iranian émigrés – the greatest number coming from Bukhara, Bakharz (in Khorasan) and Shiraz – and Indian pupils imitating their styles. Probably the earliest manuscript in this mode is the *Anwar-i suhaili*, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, possibly dating from the 1550s or 1560s.<sup>14</sup> It bears Qutb Shahi seals but no colophon. The colours are rich and dark, and the vegetation aggressively lush. The paintings frequently depict palaces with intersecting arcades (as in surviving sixteenth-century architecture at Hyderabad) and numerous doors, windows and balconies, with tiny figures peeping out.



119. A page from the  
*Ambar-i suhaili*  
Golconda, c. 1550-60  
or later  
Victoria and Albert  
Museum, London,  
I.S. 13(1-126) 1962

Several artists contributed to this work. One may have been an Ottoman Turk. Another was trained in the western Indian style, popular in Gujerat and Rajasthan before he came to the Deccan, for he uses the oblong formats, fiery reds and blues and distinctively striped clouds of Jain manuscript illustration (119). The *Sindbad nama* in the India Office Library, London, was probably illustrated at Golconda about the same time.<sup>15</sup> Although more restrained than the Victoria and Albert book, there is a similar exuberance, rich colouring and numerous depictions of architecture in Deccani style.

In the same collection, a group of twenty-five paintings in a loose Bukhara mode may have been done at Golconda by Bukhara artists or their Indian pupils.<sup>16</sup> Some of the figures look more South Indian than Central Asian and the palette, with its strident blue, is Deccani. At least two other illustrated manuscripts, in a variant of the Bukhara style, appear to have been painted at Golconda. A work by Hatifi, in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, bears Qutb Shahi seals and includes many Deccani architectural details in its compositions.<sup>17</sup> The colophon of a *Shirin and Khusrau* in the Khudabaksh Library, Patna, mentions the name of the scribe, Yusuf, the date of execution 976AH/1568-69AD and the patron's name, Ibrahim-i Adil.<sup>18</sup> The only Ibrahim ruling in the eastern Islamic world at that time was Ibrahim Qutb Shah. The manuscript's tall, narrow format and the tendency to divide illustrated pages horizontally into superimposed registers are like later pictures known to be from Golconda.

We are on firmer ground with the medical encyclopedia in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, for its colophon states that it was written at Golconda by the scribe Baba Mirak Herati in 1572.<sup>19</sup> It contains no miniatures but the double-page frontispiece has superb simurghs attacking lions amidst surging arabesque, as well as flying angels bearing golden trays and tambourines (120). Decoration is dense and seething, and the palette is coral-red, lilac-pink and purple.





120. Frontispiece of a medical manuscript *Zakhira-i khwarizmshahi* Golconda, dated 1572 Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, Indian Ms. no. 30

Other works in a similar style include a manuscript of the *Surahs of the Qoran* in the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, related to the medical encyclopedia, a *Shama wa parwana* in the same collection, dated 984 AH/1576–77 AD at Golconda, possibly illustrated by an émigré Ottoman painter,<sup>20</sup> two paintings from two different manuscripts in the Binney Collection<sup>21</sup> and an undated *Yusuf and Zulaykha* of Jami in the British Library, London.<sup>22</sup>

## NOTES

1. Minorsky (1955), pp. 50–73.
2. For the history of Golconda, see Sherwani (1974); Firishita, pp. 294–392; *The Cambridge History of India* vol. III (Delhi, reprinted 1963), chs 16–18 and vol. IV (Delhi, reprinted 1965), chs 8–10.
3. Minorsky (1954), pp. 271–97.
4. *The Cambridge History of India* vol. IV (Delhi, reprinted 1965), p. 197.
5. Robinson, pp. 215–17.
6. Diez A. Robinson, figs 120–21.
7. Ms. 246 Robinson, figs 122–23.
8. *Ibid.*, fig. 128.
9. *Ibid.*, fig. 129.
10. H. 762. Robinson, pl. LXVII.
11. H. 2153, H. 2160. Robinson, figs. 142–47. For another account of Turkman painting, see Welch (1979), pp. 19–21.
12. In his courses on Islamic painting at Harvard University.
13. Ms. 179. Unpublished.
14. I.S. 13 (1–126) 1962. 126 miniatures. Stchoukine (1959), pls LXXXV–LXXXVI.
15. Ethé 1236. Stchoukine (1959), pls LXXXVIII–LXXXIX.
16. India Office Library, London, Johnson albums 27 and 28.
17. Uncatalogued. Persian Ms. 261. I am grateful to Robert Skelton for bringing this manuscript and several other early Golconda works described in this chapter, to my attention.
18. *Catalogue of Arabic and Persian manuscripts at Bankeipore* vol. II (Patna, 1910), no. 229. Miniatures unpublished.
19. Uncatalogued Indian Ms. no. 30. Skelton (1973), fig. 152.
20. Ms. 179.
21. Binney (1973), nos 115–16.
22. Or. 4535. Blochet (1929b), pl. CXXXVI.

## The flowering of poetry and painting at Golconda (1580–1626)

**D** ECCANI TRADITION maintains that Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah (1580–1612) was as impassioned in his patronage of the arts as his contemporary at Bijapur, Ibrahim Adil Shah II. Unfortunately very few paintings survive from his reign, but those which do are extraordinarily beautiful and refined. Most are contained in a lavish copy of the sultan's own Urdu poetry, the *Kulliyat* (Collection), in the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, one of the most richly illustrated Indian books. The quality of the sultan's poetry establishes him as India's first great Urdu poet and one of the finest to use the early (Deccani) idiom of that language.

He was also a connoisseur of architecture. He founded the city of Hyderabad in 1591 and moved his capital there, ten kilometres away from the congested fortress of Golconda. The city was built on a gridiron plan and filled with great squares and monuments such as the *charminar*, an enormous triumphal arch, and the *charkaman*, four colossal gateways around a central plaza, one of which led to the royal palace. Later he built mosques, caravanserais, a network of irrigated gardens, orderly rows of shops, a medical college and a hospital which still stands in the old city. His interest in town planning made Hyderabad one of the finest cities in India.<sup>1</sup>

To understand Deccani painting, it is important to understand the differences between Mughal and Deccani civilization. The Mughals were passionate recorders of wordly phenomena. They encouraged historiography and factual *reportage* of current events. Painting was often narrative, either illustrating Mughal achievements of the past and present, or precise portraits of men, animals and plants. Few histories were commissioned in the Deccan, so that we know far less about Islamic civilization there than in northern India. In painting, such scant attention was paid to recording events realistically that it is difficult to differentiate between portraits of real princes and idealized symbols of royal splendour.

Deccani literature is similarly idealized. Zuhuri, in his *Khan-i khalil*, an account of the Bijapuri court, gives little factual data.<sup>2</sup> Instead he praises the beauty and accomplishments of Ibrahim Adil Shah II and his courtiers in elaborate and metaphorical language. At Golconda a similar 'history' in a non-historical manner was written for Sultan Muhammad Quli. It is a long poem in Deccani Urdu entitled *Qutb mushtari* by Wajhi, composed in 1609–10. The hero of the tale is the sultan himself: one night he dreams of a maiden with whom he falls in love. He sets out impulsively to find her, accompanied by his best friend, Utarad the painter. She turns out to be Mushtari, the princess of Bengal. Utarad gets a commission to



121. A page of illumination (fol. 2b)  
from the *Kulliyat* of Sultan Muhammad  
Quli Qutb Shah  
Golconda, c. 1590–1600  
27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio)  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad

paint murals in her apartments and introduces the sultan's portrait. She falls in love with it and then with the sultan himself who carries her off to Hyderabad. A translation of the poem would be useful as many of its scenes are likely to have been illustrated by Golconda painters.<sup>3</sup>

The *Kulliyat* of Muhammad Quli's poetry in the Salar Jang Museum is so lavishly illuminated (121) and illustrated (122–33) that it must be the sultan's own copy.<sup>4</sup> It has been bound with the *Divan* of Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah, clearly a later addition since its calligraphy, format and paper differ. The first six miniatures, fols 5a, 12a, 24b, 29b, 53b and





122. *Polo match*, fol. 5a of the *Kulliyat* of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah  
Attributed here to the Hyderabad painter Golconda, c. 1590–1600  
27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio)  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad

87b, glisten with pricked gold surfaces and iridescent colours, exemplifying, more than any other work, the richness of Golconda taste. The restraint of Turco-Iranian art is absent except in the last two paintings, fols 93a and 97b, probably by a Bukhara artist (132–33).<sup>5</sup> Extremely sober in his use of colour and line, he is an artist of meagre talent.

His Indian colleague, whom we can call the Hyderabad painter, executed the first six paintings with far greater originality. Although related to Bukhara painting, especially to the work of an eccentric artist named Muhammad Murad Samarqandi,<sup>6</sup> his style is strongly Indian. His liberal use of gold and such colours as bluish-purple and salmon-red is typical of



123. *A prince enthroned*, fol. 12a of the *Kulliyat* of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah  
Attributed here to the Hyderabad painter  
Golconda, c. 1590–1600  
27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio)  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad

Golconda. He applies the colours so thickly that crackling and flaking have occurred in many areas. His paintings also recall the simpler illuminations of the medical manuscript in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin, dated 1572, which he may have worked upon as a younger man (120).

His first miniature, fol. 5a, depicting a polo match, is not his most original and closely follows his foreign colleague's work (122). In his second page, fol. 12a (123), a king has his feet massaged by two youths amidst a lush jungle of arabesque. At bottom left a manservant, offering a ewer of wine, has the profile and moustache typical of Indian sultanate painting and



124. *A lady dozing in a garden*, fol. 24b of  
the *Kulliyat* of Sultan Muhammad  
Quli Qutb Shah  
Attributed here to the Hyderabad painter  
Golconda, c. 1590–1600  
27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio)  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad



125. Detail of 124





XIX. *Tree on the island of waqwaq*  
 Golconda, early seventeenth century  
 14.6 × 9.5 cm  
 Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR)  
 See p. 172 and black and white illustration 137



xx. *African eunuch*  
Golconda, third quarter  
seventeenth century  
22.5 x 12.3cm  
Private collection  
See p. 185 and black and  
white illustration 155



126 (LEFT) *King Solomon enthroned*, fol. 29b  
of the *Kulliyat* of Sultan  
Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah  
Attributed here to the Hyderabad painter  
Golconda, c. 1590–1600  
27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio)  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad



127. (ABOVE) Detail of 126

128. (LEFT) Detail of 126







129. (LEFT) *Dancing before a king*, fol. 53b of the *Kulliyat* of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah. Attributed here to the Hyderabad painter Golconda, c. 1590–1600. 27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio). Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad

130. (BELOW) Detail of 129



the Mughal *Hamza nama* (c. 1562–77). The third painting, fol. 24b, shows a lady dozing against a huge bolster while her attendants sprawl in elegant poses against a red lacquered wall (124–25). The lady's heavily modelled robes recall textile conventions in the *Hamza nama*. The fourth miniature, fol. 29b, teems with life (126–28). Solomon sits on his throne surrounded by angels and demons. Animals glance and growl at one another (127), while grotesques munch the border's leafy arabesque.<sup>7</sup> The simurgh and other birds in the golden sky (128) are composed of brilliantly coloured marbled paper, a speciality of Ottoman Turkey and the Deccan (see pp. 135–38). In the fifth illustration, fol. 53b, angels shower a



131. *Four men outside the walls of a city*,  
fol. 87b of the *Kulliyat* of Sultan  
Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah  
Attributed here to the Hyderabad painter  
Golconda, c. 1590–1600  
27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio)  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad

prince with jewels while he watches a dance performance (129–30). The angels' wings are again made of marbled paper. The paint has been applied so thickly that it has crackled like porcelain (130) and in some areas the surface is actually in relief. The ladies seated in the bottom left-hand corner, with large eyes and pointed noses, are thoroughly un-Persian, resembling the figures in the 1588 Mughal *Divan* of Anwari, in the Fogg Art Museum.<sup>8</sup> The Hyderabad painter's last painting of the book, fol. 87b, copies, like his first illustration, metropolitan Persian styles with little originality (131).

This artist's work provides ample evidence of his Indian origin and training, which he

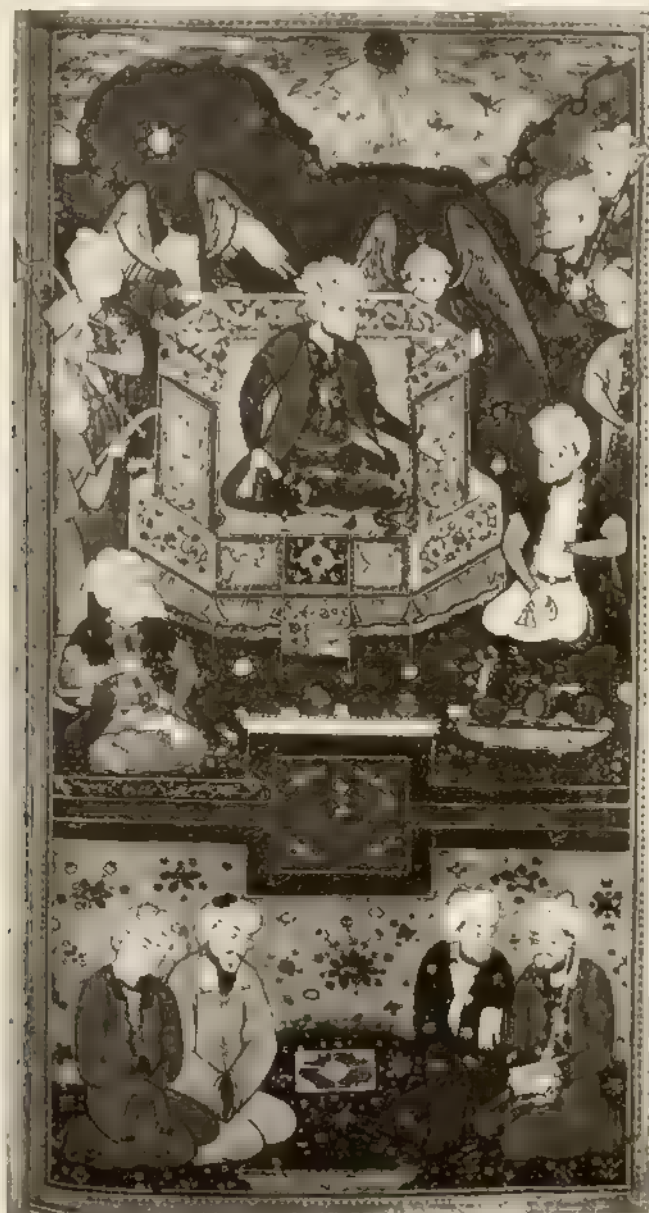


132. *A king and queen enthroned*, fol. 93a of the *Kuliyat* of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah Golconda, c. 1590–1600  
27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio)  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad

partially conceals beneath an acquired Persianate façade. Alongside clear Deccani traits, the influence of Mughal illustrated books of the 1570s and 1580s is apparent. Mughal artists trained in the *Hamza nama* style probably emigrated to the Deccan in the 1590s, the approximate date of the *Kuliyat*. This manuscript indicates that Muhammad Quli's atelier was a cosmopolitan place where Persian, Central Asian, Mughal and Deccani artists worked side by side.

A tiny painting of a young prince on horseback, in the Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC, can also be attributed to the royal Golconda workshop, c. 1600 or a bit earlier (134).<sup>9</sup> The





133. *A king enthroned surrounded by angels and courtiers*, fol. 97b of the *Kulliyat* of Sultan Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah Golconda, c. 1590–1600  
27.7 × 14.5 cm (folio)  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad

painting's dainty precision contrasts with the mellow, painterly style of nearby Bijapur. The green and white 'jewels' decorating gold surfaces and the intersecting arcades over the garden gate are Golconda conventions. The picture has been mounted on an album leaf, but was probably excised from a lost manuscript, the Deccani equivalent of the pocket-sized manuscripts in vogue at the Mughal court during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The young prince and his retinue approach a pink and gold pavilion where a bearded doorkeeper awaits them. Nearby a strange dervish beckons, weighted down with heavy metal tools strapped to his waist. A mountain goat picks his way among pink, blue and tan

rocks in the background. A finely written Arabic inscription in a niche inside the door gives the painter's name: *sawwarahu jan quli* ('Painted by Jan Quli'). It is one of only four signed Golconda paintings in existence.<sup>10</sup>

Two large composite paintings on card, made of smaller paintings cut out of a single manuscript, were probably painted at Golconda c. 1600 or shortly thereafter. One is in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.<sup>11</sup> The other was recently sold at a Paris auction.<sup>12</sup> The entire group is the work of two hands. One is a Shiraz artist who has adopted a few Indian conventions. The other is an Indian painter imitating his colleague's foreign manner, but unable to disguise his Deccani background. He is responsible for the uppermost miniature on the left and the central miniature on the right in the Paris page and the lower left-hand section of the Dublin page. His faces are doll-like, his compositions often include buildings with many windows, balconies and niches, enclosing tiny figures, and his landscapes have formally arranged tufts of grass.

An impressively large painting of a composite horse in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR), combines bold simplicity of form with intricate surface effects, like a richly inlaid piece of Deccani metalwork (135 and col. pl. xviii).<sup>13</sup> Such composite figures, and the tiny grotesques in the background of some Islamic paintings, derive from pre-Islamic animistic cults which were popular in Central Asia. Here, tiny struggling figures, studded with white staring eyes and multi-coloured 'jewels' have the surging intensity that can be associated with Golconda.

The golden plants, animals and clouds of the background, painted directly on the uncoloured paper, resemble the mysterious drawings of the Fateh albums, in the Topkapi Saray, and related works (136).<sup>14</sup> If these drawings prove to be the work of the royal Turkman atelier at fifteenth-century Tabriz, as both Welch<sup>15</sup> and Robinson<sup>16</sup> have suggested, then they provide further indication that Turkman artists migrated to the Deccan,



134. (LEFT) *Prince and an ascetic*  
Signed: *sawwarahu jan quli* ('Painted by Jan Quli')  
Golconda, c. 1600  
8.6 × 6.4 cm  
Freer Gallery of Art, Washington DC, 54.25

135. (OPPOSITE, ABOVE) *Composite horse*  
Golconda, early seventeenth century  
21.1 × 27.9 cm  
Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR), T. 4596, fol. 2  
See col. pl. xviii on p. 146

136. (OPPOSITE, BELOW) *Animals in a fantastic landscape*  
Signed by Muhammad Siyah Qalam  
Tabriz, c. 1478–90  
Kevorkian Foundation, New York







137. *Tree on the island of waqwaq*  
Golconda, early seventeenth century  
14.6 × 9.5 cm  
Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR),  
r. 4594, fol. 26  
See col pl XIX on p. 163

along with the Turkman princes who founded the Qutb Shahi dynasty of Golconda

An eerie composite tree in the same collection also derives from pre-Islamic icons of nature worship (137 and col. pl. XIX)<sup>17</sup> Related concepts found a place in the Alexander legend of Islamic literature as the *waqwaq* island, where the world conqueror discovered a talking tree that informed him of his impending doom. The atmosphere of this painting is appropriately ominous: slithering snakes and scorpions make up the trunk, grotesque animal heads and beckoning sprites adorn the branches, while smaller composite plants mysteriously sway to silent rhythms. The sombre palette and black background with formally arranged tufts of grass suggest an early seventeenth-century Golconda provenance, an appropriate date for the composite horse as well (135 and col. pl. XVIII).

Four paintings (138–41) can be attributed to another Golconda artist, active during the first few decades of the seventeenth century. He was essentially a copyist and decorator. At least three of his known works are based on foreign sources which provided him with models

to interpret according to local taste. He aimed for opulent surface effects, loading his paintings with sinuous patterns and gorgeous colour combinations of salmon-red, lilac-pink and green.

His most famous work, a *Prince hawking*, in the India Office Library, London (138), is probably based on a lost Bijapuri original of the early seventeenth century.<sup>18</sup> The contents of the scene – a young prince in a lush meadow beside a chenar tree, with a turreted castle on a cliff in the background – derive from such Bijapuri masterpieces as the *Yogini* (82 and col. pl. xii) and the *Siesta* (85 and col. pl. xiii).

His smaller portrayal of a young prince out riding (139), in the Mayer Institute, Jerusalem, bears striking similarities to the Ahmadnagar youth riding, painted some fifty years before (10).<sup>19</sup> The Golconda prince is almost identical in pose and dress, though mirror-reversed,

138. *Prince hawking*  
Golconda, c. 1620–30  
29.6 × 22 cm  
India Office Library, London, 414



suggesting that he was drawn with the aid of a pounce taken off the Ahmadnagar painting, which may have been in the Royal Golconda Collection at the time.

A third painting of two lovers in a flower-strewn meadow, in the Fogg Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts, is copied from a conventional type of Safavid painting of the early seventeenth century (140).<sup>20</sup> The calligraphic elegance of the original has been rejected for fiery Deccani colours and new earthy rhythms. A small painting of two birds, in the Freer Gallery, Washington DC, may also have been painted by the same artist, considering its reddish palette and aggressive, spiky vegetation (141).<sup>21</sup> He has brilliantly captured the two birds in a tense moment just as they turn towards a threatening noise on the right.

No contemporary Deccani portraits of either Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah or Muhammad Qutb Shah (1612–26) have come to light. There are several slightly later Deccani portraits of the latter sultan, and it is likely that these versions, copied after paintings now lost, preserve his features faithfully.<sup>22</sup> A particularly beautiful example, in a private collection, portrays



139. *Young prince riding a horse*

Golconda, c. 1620–30

20 × 11.3 cm

L. A. Mayer Institute for Islamic Art,  
Jerusalem, Ms. 127–69



140. (RIGHT) *Two lovers*  
 Golconda, c. 1630 or later  
 27.3 × 17.5 cm  
 Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge,  
 Massachusetts, 1979. 299b  
 Gift of Philip Hofer in honour of  
 Stuart Cary Welch



141. (BELOW) *Two birds*  
 Inscribed: *murgh-i zarin* ('Golden bird')  
 Golconda, c. 1620  
 9.4 × 13.2 cm  
 Freer Gallery of Art,  
 Washington DC, 29.78





142. *Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah*  
Golconda, second half seventeenth century  
21.3 × 11.9 cm  
Private collection



143. *Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah*  
Signed by Hashim  
Inscribed by Jahangir: 'A good likeness of Sultan  
Muhammad Qutb al Mulk'  
Mughal, c. 1620  
19.5 × 11.5 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, I.M. 22-1925

Muhammad dressed in a white muslin gown, opulently edged with gold, standing against a jet-black background (142)<sup>23</sup> The slightly mechanical nature of the pose suggests that the artist was working after an earlier painting, three or four decades after the king's death (1626), and not from sketches taken from life.

The picture contrasts in spirit with the Mughal portrait of the same king painted by the court artist Hashim, inscribed in Jahangir's own hand, 'a good likeness of Sultan Muhammad Qutb al Mulk', also probably based on a lost Deccani original (143).<sup>24</sup> The king in the Deccani portrait, as ebullient and sensitive as a child, seems to amble through his garden. His nervous beauty is like that of a delicate, hybrid flower.

The Mughal artist also portrays Muhammad as a pensive and poetic young man, but as with all Mughal portraits, he is rooted to the spot and there is a touch of sadness to his beauty, like a butterfly pinned down in a case. We sense the rigid etiquette of a formal court, the rock-hard sense of purpose of a great empire and a sober intellectualism in the arts. While the Deccani painting strains with romantic excess, the Mughal portrait does not insist at all. Instead, as in all classical moments of art, it expresses its energy in such a quiet way that we hardly recognize its intensity.

## NOTES

1. Sherwani (1974), pp. 301 ff.
2. See pp. 68-70.
3. Sherwani (1974), pp. 327-30.
4. Salar Jang Ms. 978. Two miniatures (fols 93a, 97b) have been published by Skelton (1973a), figs 153-54; and one miniature (fol. 29b) by Mittal (1974), pl. x. As there is no colophon, the date of the manuscript is not known. None of the paintings are signed. Welch was the first to discuss these miniatures, suggesting that they were 'indebted to a series of manuscripts painted at Bakharz in Khurasan'. (Welch (1963b), p. 10.) The *Kulliyat* contains eight illustrations, not seven as reported by Welch and Mittal.
5. Skelton (1973), figs 153-54.
6. Martin, pl. 263, James, no. 29.
7. Mittal (1974), pl. x.
8. Welch (1963c), no. 4.
9. 54-25 Welch (1963b), p. 30.
10. The other three are *Akbar Shah Husaini reading a book of prayers* (159), signed by Rahim Khan; *Shah Raju on horseback* (161), signed by Rasul Khan, both in private collections, and a *Prince seated in a garden with ladies* (176), by Rahim Deccani, in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin.
11. Skelton (1973a), figs 155-58.
12. Hôtel Drouot, 5 March 1971, lot 133.
13. T. 4596, fol. 2. Previously unpublished.
14. Formerly Sakisian Collection, Paris Kühnel (1959), p. 30; Sakisian, pl. xxxii.
15. Welch (1979), pp. 18-19.
16. Robinson (1979), pp. 242-43.
17. T. 4594, fol. 26. Skelton (1973a), fig. 160.
18. Falk and Archer, no. 414; W. G. Archer (1960), pl. 17.
19. Ms 127-69. Previously unpublished.
20. 1979. 299b Gift of Philip Hofer in honour of Stuart Cary Welch Fogg Museum Bulletin (1972), back cover.
21. 29 78. Ettinghausen (1963), p. 14.
22. They include portraits in the State Library, Rampur (Ashraf (1963), p. 41), in the Witsen album of the Ryksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam (Goetz (1958), pp. 40-41); Maharani of Vijayanagaram Collection, Benares (Mittal (1974), pl. xiii); City Palace Museum, Jaipur, A.G. 749; Mittal Museum, Hyderabad and elsewhere. Most of these portraits are inscribed with the subject's name. Probably all are posthumous portraits. Although most are aesthetically uninteresting, they may well be useful in identifying higher quality works as they come to light. The problem remains that Muhammad Quli and his successor Muhammad resembled each other and wore similar costumes, so that it is difficult to distinguish one from the other.
23. Punder-Wilson (1976) no. 187.
24. Stchoukine (1929b), pl. xxx.



## Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah of Golconda (1626–72)

**M**UHAMMAD QUTB SHAH'S SON Abdullah had to face a rapidly changing political situation soon after he ascended the throne. Malik Ambar of Ahmadnagar, the Deccan's defender, had just died, and a year later the aggressively imperialistic Shah Jahan became Mughal emperor (1627–58). He marched south in 1630 and within three years had captured Daulatabad, the Ahmadnagar capital, and sent the last Nizam Shahi sultan to the Mughal prison at Gwalior. Returning to the Deccan in 1635, he forced Abdullah to agree to the harsh terms of the *Inqiyad nama* ('Deed of Submission') which transformed Golconda into a Mughal protectorate. Among the conditions imposed, Sunnism was to replace Shism as the official creed, the Mughal emperor's name was to be inserted in the Friday prayers (*khutba*) recited in the mosques, in place of the Safavid shah's, and the annual tribute paid to the Mughals was drastically increased. After the Deed of Submission was accepted, Shah Jahan sent his jewel-studded portrait to Abdullah, who reciprocated with a portrait of himself.<sup>1</sup>

Despite Shah Jahan's withdrawal from the Deccan front in 1636, the Mughals continued to interfere in Deccani politics, mainly through the Mughal resident at Golconda who functioned as ambassador, spy and mediator. His word carried increasing weight in government decisions. Abdullah repeatedly sent secret letters to Dara Shikoh, Shah Jahan's eldest son and heir apparent, begging him to pacify his father and to check the dangerous influence of his brother and rival, Aurangzeb, who advocated outright conquest of Golconda and Bijapur.<sup>2</sup>

With the transformation of the kingdom into a Mughal protectorate and the frequency of diplomatic contacts between Delhi and Golconda, Mughal cultural influence rapidly increased. In the arts, the realism of Mughal painting came to be just as admired as the Iranian tradition. From about 1630, Golconda portraitists began placing their subjects against an empty background in imitation of Mughal pictures. Although these are among the least exciting Deccani paintings of the seventeenth century – probably because they represent a foreign mode superficially adopted and not sensitively understood – they do provide us with the first reliable likenesses of the Golconda sultans.

Before dealing with the Mughalizing style, we will discuss a group of five miniatures executed at the beginning of Abdullah's reign (c. 1630), but in a culturally 'earlier', more indigenous idiom. Bound up in a *Divan* of Hafiz, in the British Museum, they have no connection with the text of the manuscript or its other illustrations, which are in a metropolitan Persian style.<sup>3</sup>

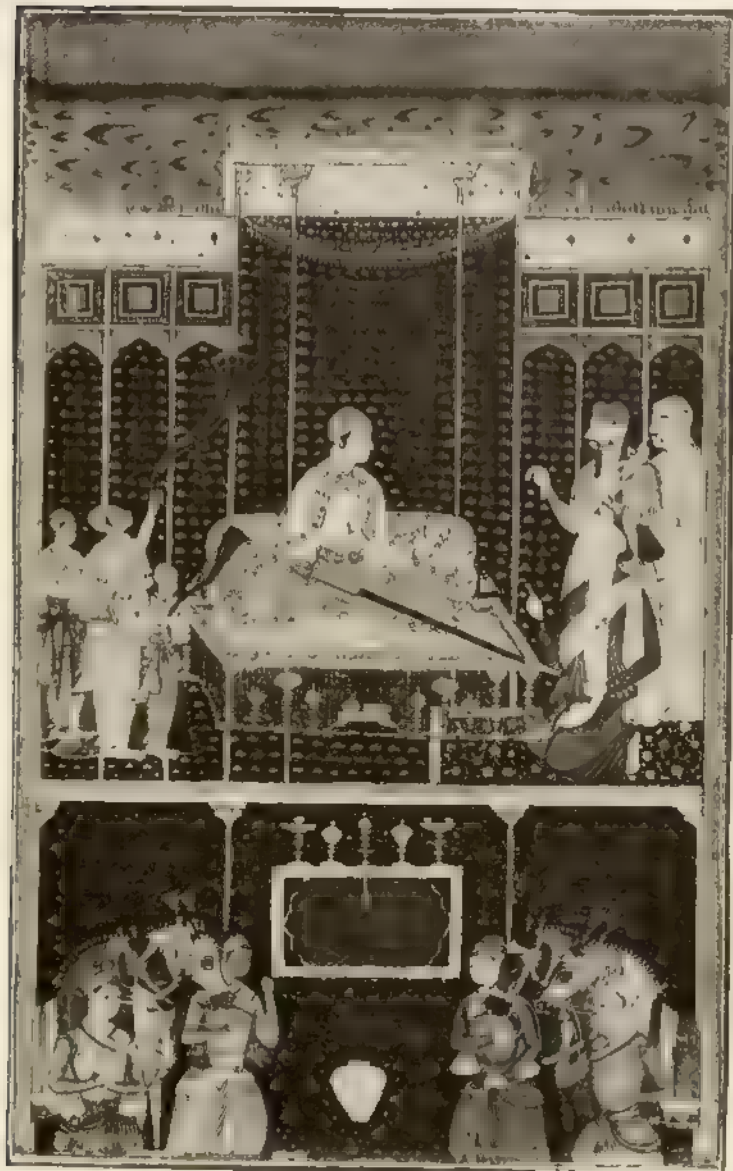


144. *Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah watching a dance performance*  
 One of five miniatures (fol. 26b) inserted into a *Divan* of Hafiz  
 Golconda, c. 1630  
 21.3 × 11.2 cm  
 British Museum, London, 1974 6-17 1-5

One of these pages, fol. 26 b (144) establishes a new dating for the entire group. Barrett originally suggested a date of 1610–20 for the five pages.<sup>4</sup> He believed they depicted the same prince as in the British Museum *darbar* (145),<sup>5</sup> which he identified as a portrait of Muhammad Qutb Shah (1612–26) on the basis of its resemblance to the fine Mughal portrait of that ruler painted by the artist Hashim (143). Later, he changed his mind and published them as 1586–90, assuming that the young prince was not Muhammad but his predecessor Muhammad Quli, who would have been twenty years old in 1586.<sup>6</sup>

Since then, Skelton has shown that the courtier seated to the right of the throne in the *darbar* scene is Muhammad ibn-ı Khatun, prime minister to Abdullah, identifying him on the basis of an inscribed portrait also in the British Museum.<sup>7</sup> Skelton discovered that Khatun was elevated to the rank of prime minister and was allowed to sit by the side of Abdullah's





145. *Darbar of Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah as a youth*

Golconda, c. 1630

25 × 15.5 cm

British Museum, London, 1937 4-10 01

throne in 1629, so the sultan portrayed in the *darbar* must be Abdullah. Since he is still beardless and very young, the painting probably dates from c. 1630 when the sultan was sixteen.

Now a close inspection of fol. 26b of the *Divan* of Hafiz (144) also shows Khatun seated to the left of the sultan, unmistakable, with his white beard and heavy black eyebrows, while all the other courtiers are clearly kneeling or standing. As the young prince wears a red turban with a gold cross band, the same fashion worn by Abdullah in the *darbar* picture (145), he must also be Abdullah at about the same date. We can therefore assume that the archaizing style of these miniatures continued well into the seventeenth century, alongside a more realistic mode influenced by Mughal taste.



The 1630 *darbar* scene (145) is a Deccani interpretation of Mughal group portraits of the Jahangir period.<sup>5</sup> But the artist, unlike his Mughal contemporaries, cared little for exploring the personalities of the courtiers or their relationships. His aim was to convey a convincing image of royal magnificence. By placing the figure of the sultan, not in the centre of the picture space, but above it, a traditional Indian practice, he makes his royal status clear. Like the pages and grooms, we too look up to him. Golden vessels sparkle in the foreground like offerings to a god and even the red footstools beneath the throne suggest our ascension towards a sacred presence.

Similar doll-like faces, a dark background and tight curls at the top of the page, representing clouds, in the Freer Gallery's *Holy family* reveal the hand of the same painter (146).<sup>6</sup> Although his rich palette of mauve, orange and green, liberally enhanced by gold, is

146. *Holy family*  
Golconda, c. 1630  
15.4 × 11.4 cm  
Freer Gallery of Art,  
Washington DC, 07.267



charming, his figures are wooden. The *Yogini*, in the Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona, painted in an identical style, is also his (147).<sup>9</sup> The sources for this painting are the dark, mysterious *yoginis* of the Bijapur school (82, 86), influenced by European representations of Orpheus playing his lyre. The Golconda artist has transformed the earthy romanticism of Bijapur into an elegant, but very dry composition. Another painting by the same hand, depicting the ascension of King Solomon into heaven, based on a Turkish or Persian source,<sup>10</sup> was recently sold at auction in London.<sup>11</sup>

The most gifted interpreter of Persian conventions during the mid seventeenth century was undoubtedly the painter of the *Courtesan*, in an American private collection (148).<sup>12</sup> Lacking the calligraphic refinements of Iran, the artist uses stronger, more Indian ways to convey voluptuousness. The jungle-like border breathes heavily of life and fertility, bright tones of pink, orange and blue jar our senses and fluttering veils coquettishly reveal naked flesh. A closely related painting of a prince in a garden, in the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection, Bombay, has the same rich palette and exuberant border, but its sharp rhythms concede less to Indian taste.<sup>13</sup>



147. (OPPOSITE, LEFT) *Yogini*  
Golconda, c. 1630  
Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka  
Mandala, Poona, 128

148. (OPPOSITE, RIGHT) *Courtesan*  
Golconda, c. 1630–50  
28.6 × 20 cm (folio)  
Private collection

149. (RIGHT) *Sultan Abdullah Qutb  
Shah sitting on a terrace*  
Golconda, c. 1640  
12.5 × 11.3 cm  
Ashmolean Museum,  
Oxford, 1960.203



The portrait of Abdullah seated on a garden terrace, in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, is one of the most poetic Golconda pictures in the Mughal manner (149).<sup>14</sup> As the sultan is represented as a young man, we can date the work to about 1640 when he was twenty-six. Two portraits of him as an older man, one in the Victoria and Albert Museum,<sup>15</sup> the other in the Ehrenfeld Collection,<sup>16</sup> were probably painted some ten years later (150–51). The pictures are approximately the same size and are basically the mirror image of each other, with some differences in the weapons carried and the placing of the hands. Originally they may have faced each other on opposite pages of the same Golconda album, and they are almost certainly by the same anonymous artist.

Although they have the realism and enamel-like finish of Mughal work, the painter was probably a Deccani, not a Mughal émigré working in the south. He applied paint so thickly that several areas in both paintings have a porcelain-like crackle. The profuse use of gold and the brilliant lapis-lazuli background are alien to Mughal sobriety. In the Ehrenfeld picture, wispy golden trees have been painted at the sultan's feet, golden rays pour forth from heaven, blessing his rule, and a golden inscription identifies him as *padishah sultan abdullah qutb shah*.<sup>17</sup>

The most exciting seventeenth-century Golconda painting to have emerged is the processional portrait of Abdullah riding an elephant, attended by a bustling throng of courtiers, pages, singers and musicians, in the collection of the Saltykov-Shtshedrine State Public





150. *Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah*  
Golconda, mid seventeenth century  
19 × 10 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum,  
London, I.S. 18-1980



151. *Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah*  
Golconda, mid seventeenth century  
19.5 × 10 cm  
William Ehrenfeld Collection,  
Tiburon, California

Library, Leningrad (152).<sup>18</sup> With a dramatic intensity typical of the Deccan, the artist has recorded the vigorous poses and strong forward thrust of a moving crowd (153), something the Mughal artist for all his familiarity with western painting was incapable of doing, preferring instead to represent a group of people as a sedentary mass of closely packed bodies.

Vivid colours add to the excitement: the sky is deep blue streaked with orange clouds, the central pavilion is completely gold, studded in Golconda fashion with white, green, and red 'jewels'. The sultan, whose robes are also entirely gold, rides a saffron elephant flanked by attendants on blue elephants. Despite the complexity of the gesticulating figures, the effect is not chaotic. The artist has brilliantly pulled all the details together, just as the multitude of stone figures carved on the surface of Hindu temples form patterns which harmonize with structural lines.

As the sultan appears to be the same age as in the previous two paintings (150-51), a mid seventeenth-century date is likely. The artist shows considerable familiarity with contemporary Mughal painting. The contorted faces of the singers behind the sultan (154) recall the grimaces of Mughal warriors in a page from the Mughal *Shah Jahan nama*, depicting an incident during the siege of Kandahar.<sup>19</sup> The realism of the architectural setting and the suggestion of a vanishing point perspective are new to Golconda painting and indicate western influence. European artists may have worked for the sultan, leaving a lasting imprint on the school. This brilliant work proves that by the mid seventeenth century Deccani painting particularly at Golconda was rising to dazzling new heights rather than decaying, as many writers have affirmed.<sup>20</sup>

Eventually we shall probably be able to identify the noblemen who march ahead of the sultan, and pin-point the date and celebration depicted. At present only a few faces are familiar. The slim round-shouldered man in the uppermost row nearest the sultan is Khairat Khan. His inscribed portrait is in the British Museum.<sup>21</sup> According to Bilgrami, he was an important minister from 1634 until his death in 1655.<sup>22</sup> Standing before him is Shah Mirza, the nephew of Sayyid Muzzaffar, who placed Abul Hasan on the throne after Abdullah's death in 1672.<sup>23</sup> Little is known of his life during Abdullah's reign. The stout courtier nearest the sultan in the middle row resembles Mir Jumlah, although he is shown with a white beard in inscribed portraits.<sup>24</sup> In the 1640s he conquered the Karnatik, nominally for the sultan. In 1655, he had already incurred the sultan's wrath and went over to the Mughals in 1656.<sup>25</sup> The painting may have been executed c. 1650, before the defection of Mir Jumlah and the death of Khairat Khan in 1655.<sup>26</sup>

The portrait of a dark nobleman, in a private collection, may be by the same hand (155 and col. pl. xx).<sup>27</sup> His complexion signifies that he was a member of Golconda's large African community and probably a eunuch, since, although he is no longer young, he has neither the beard nor the moustache which all Muslims wore. Dressed in the diaphanous white robes favoured in the Deccan and posed against a rich green background, he seems proud and resolute, though grim. Younger and more innocent, he is visible in the Leningrad procession seated on the small blue elephant behind the sultan, waving a long white scarf (153).

There he seems not much older than twenty and appears awed and enthusiastic in the king's presence. In the later portrait he must be at least forty, suggesting a date in the third quarter of the seventeenth century. In both of these pictures he wears the same low, pendulous turban and his body is full of that dignified, forward movement which this artist so effortlessly conveys.





152. *Procession of Sultan Abdullah Quth Shah riding an elephant with courtiers and musicians*  
Golconda, c. 1650

21.3 × 30.3 cm  
Saltykov-Shtshedrine State Public Library,  
Leningrad, Dorn 489, fol. 18b



153. *Detail of 152*





154. (ABOVE) Detail of 152

155. (RIGHT) *African eunuch*  
Golconda, third quarter  
seventeenth century  
22.5 x 12.3 cm  
Private collection  
See col. pl. xx on p. 164



NOTES

1. Sherwani (1974), pp. 436-38.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 439 ff.
3. 1974 6-17 (1-5). Formerly Add. 16762.
4. Barrett (1958), p. 20.
5. 1937 4-10 01. *Ibid.*, pl. 8, identified there as 'Muhammad Qutb Shah (1611-1626)'; Gray (1938), pl. A, described as 'a young prince probably Ibrahim Adil Shah II. About 1585.'
6. Barrett (1960), figs 1-5.
7. Add. 5254, fol. 24a: Skelton (1973a), pp. 186-87, fig. 151.
8. 07.267. Barrett (1960), fig. 6.
9. 128. Skelton (1973a), fig. 159.
10. Binney (1979), pp. 74-75.
11. Sotheby's, London, 4 April 1978, lot 246.
12. Welch (1973), no. 77; Welch (1963b), p. 12; Welch (1959), fig. 21.
13. Khandalavala and Chandra (1965), pl. K.
14. 1960.203. Previously unpublished. I am grateful to Simon Digby for bringing this painting to my attention.
15. Sotheby's, London, 21 April 1980, lot 145.
16. Sotheby's, London, 7 April 1975, lot 156.
17. Other portraits of Abdullah Qutb Shah, strongly influenced by Mughal taste, are in the Bickford Collection, Cleveland, Ohio (Czuma, no. 49; the painting can be dated to c. 1650 on stylistic grounds, rather than c. 1680 as the catalogue suggests); in the Hermitage Museum, Leningrad (Grek, fig. 2); and in the Bharat Kala Bavan, Benares. Several inscribed portraits are in late seventeenth-century Golconda albums produced for foreigners. In general these are stereotyped, with little originality: in the Witsen album in the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam (Goetz (1958), p. 41, fig. 17); in the British Library, Add. 22282, Or. 7964 and Add. 5254; and in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris (Irvine, pl. 33).
18. Dorn 489, fol. 18b. Martin, pl. 208, described as a 'procession of Aurangzeb'. I am grateful to M. S. Simpson for a detailed description of this painting.
19. Welch (1973), no. 66.
20. Barrett and Gray, p. 129, Barrett (1958), p. 24.
21. Add. 5254, fol. 27b.
22. Bilgrami, pp. 58-60, pl. on p. 58.
23. Inscribed portraits of him are in the British Library, Add. 22282, fol. 18; in the Witsen album in the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam (Goetz (1958), p. 43); and in the Musée Guimet, no. 35.558 (Stchoukine (1929a), no. 90).
24. British Library, Add. 7964, fol. 11; Add. 22282, fol. 9.
25. Sherwani (1974), pp. 441 ff.
26. A large cloth painting in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, also depicts a procession of Sultan Abdullah Qutb Shah with his nobles. The style, however, is crude and probably dates from the last decade of the seventeenth century, after the fall of Golconda to the Mughals (1687). Kramrisch, pls XVI-XVII.
27. On the reverse of the portrait of Sultan Muhammad Qutb Shah (p. 176 and (142)). Previously unpublished.

## Sultan Abul Hasan (1672–87) and the Hindu resurgence at Golconda

**A**BUL HASAN ascended the throne after a sudden squabble among the nobility dashed the hopes of the heir apparent, Mirza Nizamuddin Ahmad. This Arab émigré, husband of Abdullah Qutb Shah's second daughter, had been expecting to inherit the throne for many years, but his arrogance eventually caused the downfall of his Arab supporters. Abul Hasan, husband of Abdullah's youngest daughter, was proclaimed king in the hope that he would be an easy man to manipulate.<sup>1</sup>

Previously he had been living in the holy city of Gulbarga, site of the *dargah* of the fifteenth-century sufi, Gesudaraz, fountain-head of Islam in the Deccan. Abul Hasan was a follower of the famous saint Shah Raju, the direct descendant of Gesudaraz. Shah Raju accompanied his pupil to Hyderabad, where he exercised great influence at court. Two portraits of him by royal artists survive (158, 161), and two of his son, Akbar Shah Husami (157, 159). The latter was a mystical poet, a passionate student of Hindu philosophy and literature and an intimate friend of the new sultan. Both father and son are still greatly venerated by the Muslims of the Deccan. No sooner did Abul Hasan become sultan than he turned against his supporters and appointed a Telugu Brahmin, Madanna, as *mir jumlah* (prime minister). Hindu influence grew, providing the rigidly orthodox Mughal emperor Aurangzeb with an excuse for invasion. Madanna gave key posts to other Hindus. Royal *farmans* began to be issued in bilingual form, in Persian with a Telugu translation, so that many administrative posts which were formerly the preserve of Persians now came to be shared with Brahmins. In this sudden eruption of Hindu power, we can perhaps discern the oecumenical influence of Akbar Shah Husami.

Urdu, Telugu and Arabic literature were patronized by the new sultan with greater enthusiasm than Persian. Mirza Nizamuddin Ahmad, Abdullah's heir apparent, had been the centre of a circle of Arab writers and had written an Arabic history of Abdullah's reign, the *Hadiqat us salatin*. Abul Hasan, himself an ethnic Arab, though born in India, naturally encouraged Arabic literature. His spiritual guide Shah Raju wrote in Urdu, popularizing the vogue of composing *marthiyas*, or dirges, lamenting the martyrdom of Ali's sons, Hasan and Husam. It is curious that these melancholy compositions, so suited to the atmosphere of a dying kingdom, were also popular at Shia Lucknow two centuries later, just before its annexation by the British. Akbar Shah Husami translated Hindu books into Persian and wrote treatises in Sanskrit and other Indian languages.<sup>2</sup>

The religious détente at Golconda naturally annoyed Aurangzeb. After agreeing to







156 *Sultan Abul Hasan walking in a garden*  
Golconda, c. 1672–80  
27.7 × 20.6 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego

Aurangzeb's *farman* of 1674, which forbade the reception of Maratha envoys at Hyderabad, Madanna openly courted the Maratha leader Shivaji for survival. In 1677 he was received with great pomp at Hyderabad, and Madanna agreed to pay him a huge sum for the conquest of the Byapuri Karnatik. Shivaji was to keep only those areas which his father had secured for Bijapur some thirty years before. Although Shivaji's campaign was successful, he retained all his conquests and Hyderabad gained nothing.

His death in 1680 and Aurangzeb's arrival in the Deccan two years later brought Golconda's independence to an end. Abul Hasan bravely resisted and sent an army to relieve Bijapur, which the Mughals besieged first. After that city was captured (1686), he held up the Mughal armies for several months on their relentless march to Hyderabad. When they arrived before his city, Abul Hasan shut himself up in the fortress of Golconda, which the Mughals finally took by bribing a guard after a debilitating siege of eight months.<sup>3</sup>

Deccani tradition affirms that three sultans were great artistic patrons: Ibrahim Adil Shah II, Muhammad Quli and Abul Hasan, nicknamed *tana shah* or the 'king of taste'. As is the case with Muhammad Quli, few paintings can be attributed with certainty to Abul Hasan's reign, and contemporary histories shed no light on his interest in the arts. Mughal historians, writing for his enemy Aurangzeb, accuse him of debauchery and religious heresy.<sup>4</sup>

Deccani and European accounts are kinder.<sup>5</sup> From them, Abul Hasan emerges as an unusually tolerant and gentle man imbued with sufi ideals. He spent fourteen years of his youth as a pupil of Shah Raju at the shrine of Gesudaraz. As king, still under the influence of his spiritual guide, he destroyed such ambitious nobles as Nizamuddin Ahmad and Sayyid Muzzaffar. His political success, proverbial passion for the arts and mystical inclinations are reminiscent of the young Ibrahim Adil Shah II. His sufi detachment was evident when Aurangzeb's generals captured the fortress of Golconda, his last refuge. They rushed to his apartments and were amazed when the sultan, in a calm voice, invited them to join him for breakfast, which he was just about to begin, explaining how we must accept pleasure and pain with detachment as gifts of God, for God had first made him a beggar, then unexpectedly a king, and now a beggar once again.<sup>6</sup>

Of the paintings discussed in this chapter, only the portraits of the king and his courtiers can be attributed with certainty to Abul Hasan's patronage (156-62). Ten other works (163, 166-77, 179-80) can be attributed to late seventeenth-century Golconda on stylistic grounds, but it is uncertain whether they were painted before or after the fall of the kingdom to the Mughals. In some cases their patrons may have been Mughal noblemen stationed in the Hyderabad region during the period of Mughal hegemony between 1687 and 1724. One or two may even date from the early eighteenth century, although their roots clearly lie in the earlier Golconda style.

The portrait of Abul Hasan in the Binney Collection reveals a gentle, poetic man enjoying the beauty of his garden (156).<sup>7</sup> Colours are sumptuous; the king wears a *jama* and shawl made entirely of gold, and he stands before a golden sky streaked with pink and blue clouds. His impossible opulence, exaggerated swagger and benevolent smile, totally alien to the earnestness of Mughal portraits, amuse and intrigue us. His fur wrap and pointed collar follow the Central Asian fashions which were worn by the Turkman founders of the Qutb Shahi dynasty.

The strong sense of potential movement reminds us of the Leningrad procession (152) and the *African eunuch* (155 and col. pl. xx). All three portraits may be the work of the same hand.



157. (LEFT) *Saint Akbar Shah Husaini*  
Golconda, c. 1670–80

23 × 14.5 cm

C. L. David Collection, Copenhagen

158. (BELOW) *Saint Shah Raju smoking a huqqa*  
Attributed here to Rahim Khan

Golconda, c. 1670–80

20.5 × 25 cm

Private collection

159. (OPPOSITE) *Saint Akbar Shah Husaini,*  
*son of Shah Raju, reading a book of prayers*

Signed by Rahim Khan

Golconda, c. 1670–80

18 × 22.4 cm

Private collection





Since the king, who was born in 1646,<sup>8</sup> is still a young man, a date early in his reign, during the 1670s, is likely. Although the painting does not bear an inscription, the subject is definitely Abul Hasan, as attested by many inscribed portraits in albums produced by lesser Golconda artists for European and Mughal visitors to the Deccan.

Quite different in mood is the quietly reflective portrait of Abul Hasan's friend, Saint Akbar Shah Kahmullah Husaini, Shah Raju's son, in the David Collection, Copenhagen (157).<sup>9</sup> The Arabic inscription at the top of the page, which includes the saint's full name, suggests that it was written after his death, thought to have occurred in 1675:<sup>10</sup> *hazrat janab sayyid shah kahmullah husaini qaddasa allahu sirrahu* ('May God sanctify his secret' – a phrase used about deceased sufi shaykhs). Fine detail and a cool palette of lapis lazuli, violet and gold create an atmosphere of pious meditation. It is curious that the painter has given the saint a costume which so resembles the king's, complete with fur wrap and pointed collar. Perhaps this regal dress is meant to symbolize inner glory.

Painters from nearby Bijapur probably emigrated to Golconda after the mid seventeenth century, for we suddenly have evidence of a Bijapuri strand within the Golconda school, akin to the style of the artists Muhammad Khan, Haidar Ali and Ibrahim Khan (95–100). The most important surviving works in this style are, significantly, the portraits of Shah Raju and a youth, probably his son, in a private collection (158–59). As both men accompanied Abul Hasan to Hyderabad from the *dargah* of Gesudaraz in Gulbarga, then part of the kingdom of Bijapur, it is possible that Bijapuri artists went with the royal party to Hyderabad and settled there at this time.

The saint's happy face, eloquent gestures and tautly erect body beautifully convey the impression of a noble teacher (158). Except for rich tones of burgundy in the carpet on the





160. *Mirza Ilich Khan, Mughal governor of Ellichpur Golconda, c. 1670–80*  
13 × 9 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego

right, the portrait is a cool harmony of white, gold and bluish grey. His angled sword and *hugqa* tube lead our eye to the accompanying portrait of his disciple, almost certainly his son Akbar Shah Husaini (159). The latter sways back against magnificently embroidered gold pillows, hands outstretched, as if receiving a precious lesson from his father. In the book of prayers which he holds, the names Allah, Muhammad and Ali are visible. On the extreme right, an inscription gives the name of the painter Rahim Khan, who is certainly responsible for both portraits.

His debt to Bijapuri painting is immense and, through it, to Mughal realism. Yet his flowing line has a poetic rhythm which is more Deccani than Mughal. It dotingly records the flowers of the son's Kashmir shawl, his pock-marked face and every hair in his beard. The two portraits complement each other so well that there can be little doubt of Rahim Khan's intention to place them facing each other on opposite pages of the same album.

Bijapuri influence is also evident in the portrait of Mirza Ilich Khan, Mughal governor of Ellichpur in the northern Deccani province of Berar (160).<sup>11</sup> It was the custom at Golconda for painters of modest talent to produce portrait albums of Deccani and Mughal notables for sale in the bazaar to European and other foreign travellers. Several albums in the British Museum, London,<sup>12</sup> the Rijksprentenkabinet, Amsterdam,<sup>13</sup> and the Musée Guimet, Paris,<sup>14</sup> are of this calibre, as is the Manucci album in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.<sup>15</sup>

Occasionally paintings by court artists found their way into such albums. The portrait of Ilich Khan, definitely by a court artist, comes from an otherwise unremarkable album, recently dispersed. Although the oval format and heavy shading are concessions to western taste, the picture does not suffer aesthetically. It contains the same taut shapes, which seem

ready to burst with inner energy, as the portraits of Shah Raju and his son (158-59). Similar works formed part of Rembrandt's collection of orientalia which he used as models for paintings and sketches of eastern subjects.

The equestrian portrait of Saint Shah Raju, in a private collection, is more in keeping with traditional Golconda taste (161).<sup>16</sup> The thickly applied gold paint of the horse's trappings, richly tooled and decorated with green and red designs, recalls similar details in the Lenin-grad procession (152) and the British Museum *darbar* scene (145). An elegant Arabic inscription in white *naskh* in the lower right-hand corner gives the artist's name: *al abd al zaif rasul khan an nayyir khan* ('The work of the powerless slave Rasul Khan, after (?) Nayyir Khan'). Whether or not Rasul Khan has copied an earlier work by someone named Nayyir Khan, his masterful depiction of Shah Raju's horse establishes him as one of India's greatest animal painters. The horse's straining muscles and steaming breath suggest volcanic power, made visually stronger by the delicate lines of his gold jewellery and braided mane (162).

Here Shah Raju is a proud young warrior, black-bearded, significantly without a halo, a rôle that contrasts sharply with his appearance as a gentle, ageing teacher in the seated portrait (158). This fiery portrayal may be inspired by earlier Bijapuri depictions of the saint as a young man, before he settled down at Golconda as Abul Hasan's spiritual guide.

Another Golconda artist painted the portrait of a Deccani ruler, now in the Worcester Art Museum, inscribed in Persian, probably erroneously, as the likeness of Sultan Abul Hasan (163).<sup>17</sup> The king resembles Sultan Ali Adil Shah II of Bijapur (1656-72), and the painting's source may be a Bijapuri portrait of that sultan. The artist probably worked for Abul Hasan, for the rich palette of green, yellow, orange and blue and the aggressively lush vegetation are characteristic of Golconda.

During the second half of the seventeenth century some Deccani painters came under the influence of a new Iranian mode associated with the Safavid painter Shaykh Abbasi and his sons, Ali Naqi and Muhammad Taqi.<sup>18</sup> Their work constitutes a sudden break with the calligraphic subtleties of traditional Persian painters like Reza Abbasi and Muin Musawwir. It is strongly influenced by Mughal, Deccani and European art – especially European prints – but also has much in common with an earlier Iranian aesthetic present in the stiffly formal stone reliefs of the Achaemenian and Sassanian dynasties. Shaykh Abbasi is therefore both an innovator and an arch conservative; that he deeply touched Iranian sensibilities is undeniable, for eighteenth and nineteenth-century Qajar painting closely follows the path he forged.

His signed and dated works span the years 1650-84. His painting of a prince riding an elephant with attendants, in the Musée Guimet, Paris (164), is dated 1086 AH/1675-76 AD, not 1016AH/1607-8 AD as has been reported.<sup>19</sup> Heavy shading and thin washes of colour show the influence of western prints, but there is also a debt to Deccani styles. Facial types, garments and the looming hill derive from Deccani drawings, especially those executed at Ahmadnagar in the late sixteenth century. The elephant and the *mahout* are taken from the Ahmadnagar drawing of a *Running elephant* (16), possibly through a pounce made off the earlier work.<sup>20</sup>

Conversely, many Golconda paintings show the impact of Shaykh Abbasi's style. His influence is not limited to a few pictures of specific date, which could be explained by the presence of Persian paintings in Deccani collections. He was responsible for an enduring imprint, which affected the Hyderabad school even after the fall of Golconda to the Mughals, well into the eighteenth century. Given the continuing strength of this Iranian strand, it is





161 *Saint Shah Raju on horseback*  
Signed by Rasul Khan  
Golconda, c. 1670–80 24 × 17.7 cm  
Private collection

SULTAN ABUL HASAN OF GOLCONDA (1672-87)



162. (ABOVE) Detail of 161



163. (ABOVE, RIGHT)  
*A sultan of Bijapur,  
probably Ali Adil Shah II  
Golconda, c. 1670-80*  
27.2 x 17 cm  
Worcester Art Museum,  
Worcester, Massachusetts,  
1958.42. Gift of Alexander  
Bullock

164. (RIGHT) *Prince on  
elephant with attendants*  
Signed by Shaykh Abbasi  
Dated 1086 AH/1675-76 AD  
20.1 x 27.5 cm  
Musée Guimet, Paris, 7166





165. *Girl playing a lute*  
Signed by Muhammad Taqi,  
son of Shaykh Abbasi  
Dated 1056 AH/1646-47 AD  
15.9 × 13.2 cm  
Private collection

possible that Shaykh Abbasi, or painters working in the style we associate with him, emigrated to the Deccan. Local artists absorbed his conventions, developed a hybrid style c. 1660 and later carried it with them, by this time considerably Indianized, to Rajasthan courts after Golconda's fall. The heavily shaded portraits of Maharana Amar Singh II of Mewar (1698-1710)<sup>21</sup> and lightly coloured drawings of the Sawar court<sup>22</sup> would have been inconceivable in the context of Rajasthan painting without contact with the style of Shaykh Abbasi and the Golconda school.

The painting of a young girl playing a lute, recently sold on the London art market, is signed by Muhammad Taqi, son of Shaykh Abbasi, and bears the date 1056 AH/1646-47 AD (165).<sup>23</sup> Its style is identical to Shaykh Abbasi's. A related picture of a girl admiring herself in a mirror, in the Pierpont Morgan Library, is in Shaykh Abbasi's style transformed by Golconda taste (166).<sup>24</sup> Line has become fluid and, although most of the colours are still pale,





166. *Girl admiring herself  
in a mirror*  
Signed by Ali Naqi, son of  
Shaykh Abbasi  
Golconda, dated  
1106 AH/1694–95 AD  
15 × 9.9 cm  
Pierpont Morgan Library,  
New York, M. 458, fol. 23b

the tree in the background bears luscious orange fruit, quite unlike the Iranian's staid work. The inscription giving the name of the artist Ali Naqi, son of Shaykh Abbasi, and the date 1106 AH/1694–95 AD permits two interpretations. One is that this page is a copy of a work by Ali Naqi, by an unknown Golconda artist who retained the inscriptions of the original. The other possibility is that Ali Naqi himself came to the Deccan, modified his style to suit his new patrons and painted this picture there.

A rich green and orange palette reveals the hand of another Golconda follower of Shaykh Abbasi in the portrait of a bizarre nobleman, said to be Nazar Khan of Balkh, in the Binney Collection (167). The painter, keen to convey the fierce character of this Central Asian warrior serving in the Deccan, gives him a fearsomely exotic headdress and a toothy grimace.

The drawing of a sleeping girl in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR), has the heavily shaded contours and facial type of Shaykh Abbasi's work but not his puritan spirit (168).<sup>25</sup>



167. (LEFT) *Nazar Khan of Balkh*  
Golconda, last quarter seventeenth century  
16.4 × 10.9 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego

168. (BELOW) *Sleeping girl*  
Golconda, last quarter seventeenth century  
13 × 16.5 cm  
Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR), F. 4589, fol. 1



Instead, an alluring tropical world springs to life; we sense its warm breezes, luxuries and languid pace. Delicate twists of loosened garments and serene expressions suggest both inner contentment and sexual joy. Although such pungent celebrations of life are profoundly Indian, they are more frequently encountered in sculpture than in miniature painting.

Related paintings, though less evocative and more conventionally pretty, cover the top and four sides of a small lacquered papier-mâché box, perhaps a jewel casket, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London (169).<sup>26</sup> The scenes depict a sleeping princess dreaming of her absent lover (172), remarkably like the Berlin drawing, a European gallant fluting to deer (174), a young girl grasping a tree while breezes play with her diaphanous robes (171), an adolescent prince enthroned (170) and a courtesan dancing (173). Meticulous draughtsmanship and restrained colours create a mood of delicate sensuality. The artist is almost certainly Rahim Deccani, for the box is identical in style to a painting on paper which bears his name, in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin (176).<sup>27</sup> It depicts a young prince seated on a throne in a garden, surrounded by beautiful women, very much like one of the scenes on the box. The inscription above the prince's head reads: *raqam-i banda rahim dakani* ('The work of the slave Rahim Deccani'). The use of the *nisbat*, *dakani*, in the artist's name suggests that, although he was a native of the Deccan, he was working elsewhere, perhaps in North India or Iran. He may have been one of the several Deccani artists who worked in Iran during the late seventeenth century, carrying back the synthesis of Indo-Iranian styles achieved at Golconda.

By this time Indian lacquer painting, as exemplified by Rahim Deccani's work, was beginning to influence Iranian lacquerware. Recently two lacquered pen boxes were sold at auction in Paris, decorated in a transitional blend of Indian and Iranian taste, as if the artist had worked in an Indian style as a young man and shifted to a more Iranian mode later in life.<sup>28</sup> One, inscribed with the name Rahim Deccani, is decorated with figures similar to the Victoria and Albert box. The other is unsigned but definitely by the same hand, and bears the date 1118 AH/1706–7 AD.<sup>29</sup> It is covered with a more conventional design of birds and flowers. Rahim may have painted both in Iran, a decade or two after the Victoria and Albert box. The painting of a youth seated on rocks beneath a willow tree, also in the Victoria and Albert Museum, is probably by Rahim Deccani working in a slightly coarser style (175).<sup>30</sup>

The *Girl*, in an American private collection, is also related to his work (177).<sup>31</sup> Her green and orange costume and the shimmering gold sky, streaked with orange and blue clouds, are present in the Binney portrait of Abul Hasan (156). She was probably not painted for the sultan, however, but for a Mughal patron after the kingdom fell to Aurangzeb and his son Prince Azam Shah (1687). Identical ladies frolic by a pool-side grove in the large painting on cloth depicting Azam Shah on horseback approaching a fort, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay.<sup>32</sup> Layla and an attendant also have similar faces in the depiction of *Majnun brought before Layla in chains* in the Binney Collection (178).<sup>33</sup> All three paintings may have been executed for Azam Shah before he left the Deccan in 1702.

An unexplored Bikaner connection is likely for another Golconda artist working at this time. His *Courtesan*, deriving from Islamic, Indian and Chinese sources, is an allegory of the rose, oriental symbol of beauty (179). A nightingale, the traditional lover of the rose in Persian mystical poetry, has perched on the girl's hand. She wears diaphanous robes of pink, the rose's colour, while her veil and the border of the painting are green, like foliage. Although the artist has a remarkably fluid line, he prefers subtle shapes, like the courtesan's delicate hands, to bold effects.





169. A lacquered jewel box  
Attributed here to Rahim Deccani  
Golconda, last quarter  
seventeenth century  
H. 8.7 cm; L. 13.7 cm, W. 9.2 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum,  
London, 851-1889



170. One side of the box  
illustrated in 169



171. One side of the box  
illustrated in 169

172. The top of the box  
illustrated in 169



173. One side of the box  
illustrated in 169



174. One side of the box  
illustrated in 169





175. (LEFT) *Prince seated on rocks beneath a willow tree*  
 Attributed here to Rahim Deccani  
 Golconda, last quarter seventeenth century  
 18.5 × 11 cm  
 Victoria and Albert Museum, London, D. 405-1885

176. (BELOW) *Prince seated in a garden with ladies*  
 Signed by Rahim Deccani  
 Golconda, last quarter seventeenth century  
 22 × 32 cm  
 Chester Beatty Library, Dublin







177. (RIGHT) *Girl*  
Golconda, last quarter seventeenth century  
10.3 × 7.3 cm  
Private collection

178. (BELOW) *Majnun brought before Layla in chains*  
Golconda, c. 1700  
17.2 × 13.4 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego





179. *Courtesan*  
Golconda, last quarter seventeenth century  
28 × 19 cm  
Private collection



180. *Animals and ascetics in a landscape*  
Inscribed: 'Bought at Bhagnagar  
[Hyderabad], purchase price 800 rupees,  
checked today in 1693.'

Golconda, c. 1690

36.7 × 24.7 cm

G W. Gemmell Collection,  
Suffolk, England

Eighteenth-century painting both at Hyderabad and at Bikaner, in Rajasthan, show the influence of this artist's work. The maharaja of Bikaner, Anup Singh, who spent nearly all his reign in Mughal service in the Deccan and died there in 1698, may have employed this artist, setting a Deccani fashion within the Bikaner school: or he may simply have collected paintings by him. Closely related is the sensitive portrayal of rural life in the Gemmell Collection, *Animals and ascetics in a landscape* (180)<sup>34</sup> The inscription on the reverse in Rajasthani Hindi, which states that it was 'bought at Bhagnagar [Hyderabad], purchase price 800 rupees, checked today in 1693', is similar to inscriptions on several Deccani paintings in the Bikaner Palace Collection, suggesting that this picture once formed part of that collection and was executed before 1693.



NOTES

1. pp. 1-23 in *Qutbshahi of Golcondah*.
2. There are two manuscripts in existence, in the Oriental Library, Mysore, and the Saraswati Mahal, Tanjore, which claim to be Saint Akbar Shah Husami's Sanskrit translation of his own Telugu composition on erotics entitled *Srngara-manjari*. See Saint Akbar Shah. The introduction by Raghavan provides information on Shah Raju, Abul Hasan and Saint Akbar Shah Husaini.
3. For Abul Hasan's reign, see Sherwani (1974), ch vii.
4. Sarkar (1912) based his account of Abul Hasan's reign on such highly critical Mughal sources as Saqi Mustaid Khan's *Maasir-i alamgiri*, Bhimsen Burhanpuri's *Nuskhah-i dilkusha* and Khafi Khan's *Muntakhab ul luhab*.
5. For a mixed collection of such accounts, translated into English, see *Qutbshahi of Golcondah* pp. 1-203.
6. Sarkar (1912), vol. iv, p. 455.
7. Welch (1973), no. 79; Binney (1973), no. 137.
8. Saint Akbar Shah, p. viii.
9. *Ibid.*, pl. c.
10. *Ibid.*, p. viii.
11. Edwin Binney 3rd Collection. Inscribed on the reverse in Dutch with the subject's name.
12. Or. 7964, Add. 5254 and Add. 22282. Unpublished. As these albums were meant for foreigners, the portraits are often inscribed with the subjects' names in Dutch or Portuguese, providing valuable assistance in identifying aesthetically more important uninscribed Deccani paintings.
13. Goetz (1958), pp. 31 ff.
14. Stchoukine (1929a), pp. 52 ff.
15. Irvine.
16. Saint Akbar Shah, pl. c.
17. 1958.42. Gift of Alexander H. Bullock. Coomaraswamy (1927), fig. 4.
18. Skelton (1972).
19. 7.166. Stchoukine (1929a), no. 92. Part of the date has been damaged, but it is more likely to be 1086 AH, than 1016 AH as reported by Stchoukine.
20. A large Indian drawing in a private collection, c. 1680, possibly by an artist working at Sawar in Rajasthan, depicts a nearly identical elephant, mirror reversed, running before a similar hill.
21. Welch and Beach, no. 28; Binney (1968), no. 6.
22. Lee, no. 52.
23. Sotheby's, London, 7 April 1975, lot 46.
24. M. 458, fol. 23 b.
25. F. 4589, fol. 1.
26. Kramrisch, pl. xxxi.
27. Barrett (1958), pl. 10; Gray (1950), pl. 147.
28. Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 28 May 1975, lots 170-170 bis. I am grateful to Jean Soustiel and Marie-Christine David for bringing these boxes to my attention.
29. Zebrowski (1982b).
30. D. 405-1885. Previously unpublished. Another related pen box is reproduced by S. I. Tyulayev *Indian Art in Soviet Collections* (Moscow, 1955), pl. 22.
31. Welch (1973), no. 81.
32. Kramrisch, pls xxxii - xxxiii.
33. Binney (1973), no. 161.
34. Archer, W. G. (1960), pl. 31.

## II

# Mughal hegemony (1687–1724)

IT IS OFTEN ASSUMED that Deccani painting suddenly degenerated into pale mimicry of Mughal styles after the capture of Bijapur (1686) and Golconda (1687) by the Mughals. We hear of the dispersal or destruction of whole collections of paintings by the iconoclast emperor Aurangzeb, his antipathy towards all the arts, except calligraphy, because of his orthodox Islamic views, the removal from positions of wealth and power of the ruling Deccani élite and their replacement by Mughal grandees from North India, sympathetic to Aurangzeb's views.

In fact, Aurangzeb's treatment of the local nobility was not harsh, and the impact of his twenty-six year invasion of the Deccan (1681–1707) was probably less inimical to the arts than is generally supposed. His only overtly hostile measure occurred after the capture of Bijapur, when he ordered that all the figural murals be erased in the Adil Shahi royal palace and in the city's Shia relic house (*asar mahal*).<sup>1</sup> The basic change which Aurangzeb brought about was the extinction of the royal dynasties at Golconda and Bijapur, which had provided lavish artistic patronage throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The sultans had been enormously rich<sup>2</sup> and were able to devote fully as much income towards artistic pursuits as the Mughal emperors themselves. Therefore, although the Deccani painting ateliers seem always to have been small in comparison with the imperial Mughal workshops, their output was dramatically original and consummately sumptuous in terms of paper, pigments and other materials used.

Considering the abrupt end of centralized royal patronage in 1686–87, it is surprising that so many marvellous paintings can be attributed to Deccani artists during nearly four decades of Mughal political domination which followed. Quality suffered to some extent, but creativity continued. Many royal artists found work with the Muslim or Hindu officers who served Aurangzeb in the Deccan. Some may have accompanied their Rajput patrons back to Rajasthan, where we suddenly notice a Deccani imprint on the schools of Mewar,<sup>3</sup> Kishangarh,<sup>4</sup> Jodhpur and Bikaner.<sup>5</sup> Still others received patronage from the great noblemen who had been feudatories of the Deccani sultans. Breaking ties with the central power at Golconda and Bijapur, they had new opportunities for amassing wealth and power at their *jagirs*, transforming them into small hereditary kingdoms. There was in fact a new demand for portraiture, some of it superb, which tended to enhance the importance of these newly independent princelings.

Aurangzeb was far too busy, in his never-ending military campaigns, to keep centrifugal forces in check. He halted for only four months at Hyderabad, capital of Golconda, after the



181. *Abdul Ghaffar Khan Bahadur*  
Deccan, last quarter seventeenth century  
35 × 24 cm (folio)  
Spink and Son Ltd, London



capture of the kingdom, and then was off again in pursuit of the Marathas, whom he now realized were the real obstacle preventing total conquest of the Deccan. He treated the local Muslim nobility with generosity, keen to enlist their support. There was no massacre of the defenders of Golconda. On the contrary, most of the great nobles, and even the lesser ranking Qutb Shahi officers were taken into Mughal service. A modern historian has written: 'As soon as Golkonda fort was secure, he [Aurangzeb] sent imperial orders (*farmans*) to all incumbent administrators and military officers throughout the kingdom. These documents confirmed the recipients in their positions, assured their safety, and ordered that they formally acknowledge the emperor's authority . . . For a short time "except for the name of the ruler, scarcely anything appears to have changed in these two kingdoms [ie Golconda proper and the Karnatik] . . ."'<sup>6</sup>

Mahabat Khan, the former commander-in-chief of the Golconda army was appointed governor of the kingdom. Ali Asghar Khan, a colleague of Mahabat Khan, became chief executive of the Mughal Karnatik. Gradually, however, some of the former Golconda officials were sent to other posts within the Mughal empire; Mahabat Khan, for example, was transferred from Hyderabad to the governorship of Lahore, in the Punjab.<sup>7</sup> Many others remained in the Deccan, and in some remote areas Qutb Shahi administrators were deliberately retained in their posts, because their experience of local conditions could not be matched by new appointees.<sup>8</sup> With Aurangzeb's distant presence in the western Deccan, locked in fierce struggle with the Marathas during the next twenty years, both the old Muslim nobility of the eastern Deccan – roughly corresponding to the kingdom of Golconda – and the new Mughal appointees in the same area became semi-independent. Their patronage of the arts was partly responsible for the superb Deccani paintings – mostly portraits – which can be attributed to the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century.

Hyderabad must have remained, however, the centre of painting, for the Mughal governors who lived there were cultured Muslim officers who had ruled with considerable independence from the Mughal emperors, even before the assumption of power by Nizam al Mulk, the first 'nizam', in 1724. After 1687 there was a succession of three powerful governors: Jan Sipar Khan (1688-1700), his son Rustam Dil Khan (1700-13) and Mubarez Khan (1713-24). Beneath the governors were the *faujdar*s, officers in charge of the maintenance of order within each district, and the fort commanders in charge of the thirteen great fortified strongholds of the former Qutb Shahi kingdom. All the civil and military administrators of rank in the Mughal Deccan were entitled *mansabdars*; the five or six hundred *mansabdars* above a certain level were known as nobles or *amirs*.<sup>9</sup> Potential patrons of painting, from the viceroy of the Deccan and the governor of Hyderabad downwards, were therefore numerous.

The shifting of patronage from great princes in cities to lesser notables in smaller urban centres accelerated during the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, occurring not only in the Deccan but in northern India as well. This phenomenon mirrored the breakdown of central authority, which great Islamic kings had imposed upon most of the subcontinent since the thirteenth century – and which had grown particularly strong during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The era of the Grand Mughals and the fabulously rich sultans of the Deccan had now passed from reality into legend.

One of the earliest paintings of this period is the large inscribed portrait of Nawab Abdul Ghaffar Khan Bahadur (181). The nawab, in a moment of leisure, smokes a magnificent *bidri*

*huqqa*, inlaid with brass flowers, of the large round type especially in vogue during the late seventeenth century. Both the delicate line of Golconda painting and the earthiness of the Bijapuri school are present, suggesting that Abdul Ghaffar's atelier had engaged painters from both capitals. Bold distortions of form – like the inordinately large *huqqa* and the tiny staircase – and intense colours – violet, orange and pricked gold – create the feeling of a private, opulent world, far removed from the down-to-earth concerns of Mughal patrons.

Nevertheless, this artist has been affected by the comparative realism of Mughal court art. There is a determination to capture the physical and moral traits of a real man, a kind of super-realism that is alien to the gentle reveries of the Deccan. The bold stare and stiff jaw of the nawab, probably a Mughal nobleman, recall the firm sense of imperialistic purpose which characterized the Mughal empire and its art.

The portrait of another nobleman, smoking a bidri *huqqa* beneath a pergola, while listening to a singer, is by a painter who received his training at the royal Bijapuri atelier during the second half of the seventeenth century (182) <sup>10</sup> The faces, bold floral patterns and thick gold impasto recall portraits of both Sultan Ali Adil Shah II (1656–72) and his son Sikandar (1672–86) (107, 118), but are less refined in finish, and earthier in spirit. Tones of pink, yellow, red and blue and a lavish display of pleasurable tastes, smells and sounds (music, fruit, flowers and gurgling water) again create a seductively magical world, leaving little doubt of a Deccani provenance, probably dating from the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Related Bijapuri painters must have emigrated further afield, to Rajasthan and the Punjab Hills. Portraits executed by an artist named Wajid who worked in eastern Rajasthan <sup>11</sup> and certain Pahari portraits, especially from Chamba, Bilaspur and Mandi, <sup>12</sup> are related to this artist's style.

The Mughal emperors patronized an official art which glorified their activities on the battlefield and at court. The valiant conqueror with his army on the march was a frequent subject in Mughal painting and was adopted by Deccani artists as well. In the portrait of a young prince galloping through the Deccani countryside (183 and col. pl. xxi), elegant attenuation of form and an overall nervous energy, typical of post-classical phases of art, convey the excitement of conquest. <sup>13</sup> The Deccani artist, more accustomed to depicting a private world of feeling than the public world of action, startles us with a blue horse of porcelain-like fragility. Flowers and a rivulet transform the dusty plains into a pleasure garden, and the prince's army is only a distant mirage.

The young man's face and costume resemble a Mughal emperor's. It has been suggested that he is Rafi ud daula, a sickly youth much addicted to opium, who ruled at Delhi for three months in 1719. The same artist painted the unfinished portrait of another young prince, adored by the ladies of his harem, in the Victoria and Albert Museum (184). <sup>14</sup> This painter probably began his career at Golconda, during the latter part of the reign of Abul Hasan (1672–86), for his women closely resemble the late Golconda painting of a girl and a nightingale (179). He may later have gone to work in North India.

Because of the emigration of Deccani artists to North India, it is often difficult to differentiate between Mughal, Rajput and Deccani paintings of the late seventeenth century. A large, impressive portrait of a Turkman warrior out hawking, with six attendants, in the British Museum, seems to be the work of a Deccani artist during the early years of the eighteenth century (185). <sup>15</sup> The colours of the background are dark and melancholy, while the courtiers wear glowing costumes of green, violet and yellow. The stirring note of fantasy

provided by the horse's outlandishly curled mane, the swarthy complexions of the attendants and the overall sombre magnificence at once recall great sixteenth and seventeenth-century Deccani paintings, like the Leningrad portrait of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II (69 and col. pl. ix).

Another version of this picture, mirror reversed and somewhat abbreviated, is in the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection, Bombay.<sup>16</sup> It bears a Persian inscription identifying the horseman as Atachin Beg Bahadur Qalmaq, a likely enough Turkman name for a Deccani officer, many of whom were Muslims from Central Asia, but hardly to be expected at the Hindu courts of Rajasthan.

Nonetheless, this painting strongly resembles Rajasthani portraits done at Kishangarh during the first half of the eighteenth century. The horse's elongated neck, bony muzzle and long, braided mane occur in the work of the court artist Dhal Chand during the 1730s.<sup>17</sup> An unpublished line drawing in the Kanoria Collection, Calcutta, definitely executed at Kishangarh, is a direct copy of the British Museum portrait. All these paintings suggest that either Deccani artists found patronage at Kishangarh, where the British Museum portrait may have been painted, or that so many Deccani paintings entered the Royal Kishangarh



182. *Nobleman smoking beneath a pergola*  
Deccan, last quarter seventeenth century  
18.3 × 27 cm  
Sainsbury Museum, Norwich





183. (OPPOSITE) *Prince galloping across a rocky meadow*  
Deccan, c. 1700  
29.3 × 19.4 cm  
Private collection  
See col. pl. xxi on p. 229

184. (RIGHT) *Prince supported by the ladies of his harem*  
Deccan, c. 1700  
24.7 × 20.2 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum,  
London, i.s. 35-1957



Collection, and found favour with the maharaja, that they influenced the course of the school throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>18</sup>

The sensitive depiction of a middle-aged Muslim officer, in the National Museum, New Delhi, may also have been painted by a Deccani artist working outside the Deccan (186).<sup>19</sup> Tones of orange, yellow, pink and green provide a moving accompaniment to the gentle mood of reflection. The portrait is reported to be inscribed with the name of the officer, Shahbaz Khan Kamboh, and dated 1695.

There are also close stylistic links between Deccani painting and the Rajasthani school of Bikaner, but the nature of the relationship has never been fully explored. Several Bikaner maharajas served the Mughals as officers in the Deccan. Rai Singh (1571-1611), Sur Singh (1620-31) and Karan Singh (1631-74) spent large parts of their reigns there; Anup Singh





185 *Atachin Beg Bahadur Qalmaq out hawking*  
Deccan or Kishangarh, early eighteenth century  
36.5 × 28 cm  
British Museum, London, 1947 9–20 06



(1674–98) resided permanently in the Deccan. A large number of superb Deccani paintings in the Bikaner Collection bear inscriptions stating that they were acquired either by Rai Singh, when he was Mughal governor at Burhanpur (1607–11),<sup>20</sup> or by Anup Singh while governor of Adoni (1689–98).<sup>21</sup> The presence of Deccani paintings, and perhaps Deccani artists, at Bikaner influenced the local style, but it is also possible that Rajasthani painters accompanied their patrons to the Deccan where they popularized Bikaner conventions.

The artist who painted the unfinished portrait of Nawab Salabat Khan, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, may have worked for Raja Anup Singh in the Deccan (187).<sup>22</sup> Impressively generous in scale and mood, this large page is a visual delight of vibrant white, green, pink and gold. The nawab's titanic proportions, daintily encased in white muslin, follow a long tradition of massively proportioned Deccani princes, reminiscent of the sixteenth-century portrait of the sultan of Ahmadnagar in Paris (4 and col. pl. 11). The palette, the ladies'



186. *Shahbaz Khan Kamboh*  
Deccan, dated 1695  
23 × 17.5 cm  
National Museum,  
New Delhi, 50. 14/14



187. *Nawab Salabat Khan*  
Deccan, c. 1698  
40.5 × 28.3 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum,  
London, I.S. 57–1949



188. *Birds in a jungle*, a page from the Urdu manuscript of the *Nal daman*, dated 1698  
Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay

excessively long eyes and the distinctive foliage, composed of tiny dabs of bright colour arranged in circles, are identical to conventions in seventeenth and eighteenth-century Bikaner painting. The inscription on the reverse, which gives the nawab's name in *devanagari* script, also suggests that this picture was painted for a Rajput patron.

The illustrations to the manuscript of the *Nal daman* in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, are by the same artist.<sup>23</sup> In the charming page depicting birds in a jungle (188), the long-tailed peacocks and pointillist trees are identical to those in the garden behind Salabat Khan.<sup>24</sup> The manuscript is dated 1698, the year of Anup Singh's death. Its language is Deccani Urdu, spoken by the Muslims of the Deccan. As it does not differ substantially from Hindustani, it was probably easily understood by the Mughal officers who lived in the Deccan. The story is a seventeenth-century version<sup>25</sup> of the romance of Nala and Damayanti, an episode from the great Hindu epic, the *Mahabharata*, implying that the manuscript, like the portrait of Salabat Khan, was executed for a Hindu nobleman.

Three paintings, which show both Mughal and Deccani traits (189–91), may have been painted by Mughal-trained artists working in the Deccan or, conceivably, by Deccani artists working in North India. The unusual portrait of a Jain nobleman worshipping the image of a naked Jain *thirthankar*, has the clarity, precision and restraint of the Mughal school (189).<sup>26</sup> The raja is identified by a fine *nastaliq* inscription on the reverse as Rai Sahai (or Bihari?) Chand. The startling sense of fantasy in this confrontation between a man and a statue, the strong blues, pinks and orange in the sky and trees, the spatially illogical setting and the raja's swarthy complexion are all Deccani traits.



189. (ABOVE) *Jain nobleman  
worshipping a thirthankar*  
Attributed here to Ali Reza  
Deccan, last quarter  
seventeenth century  
21 × 31 cm  
Private collection

190. (RIGHT) *Muslim nobleman  
smoking on a verandah*  
Signed by Ali Reza  
Deccan, last quarter  
seventeenth century  
22 × 18.3 cm  
Private collection







The portrait of a Muslim nobleman on a verandah smoking a Persian *huqqa*, in a private collection in Paris, is closely related and may be by the same artist (190).<sup>27</sup> Again the realism of the figures derives from Mughal portraiture, yet the strong palette of red, pink and gold and the dreamy landscape are not. The attendants are dark skinned and wear the long side locks affected by Deccani youths. The painting bears the signature of the artist, Ali Reza, in the lower right-hand corner. It has been suggested that he is the same Ali Reza who worked at Bikaner during the second half of the seventeenth century, but there are pronounced stylistic differences.<sup>28</sup>

The large group portrait, said to depict the Qutb Shahi sultans of Golconda, in the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad, is also so similar that it may be the work of Ali Reza, or one of his pupils (191).<sup>29</sup> Another version of this painting, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, bears a *nastaliq* inscription which identifies the figure wearing a fur collar as Abul Hasan, last sultan of Golconda. Again, torsos are rigid, the page boys have conventional, saccharine faces and long side locks and the main figure twists a pillow beneath his arm in the same distinctive gesture. All four paintings resemble the style of a Mughal artist who worked at Lahore in the 1660s.<sup>30</sup> He, or related artists, may have gone to the Deccan during the late seventeenth century and popularized this style.

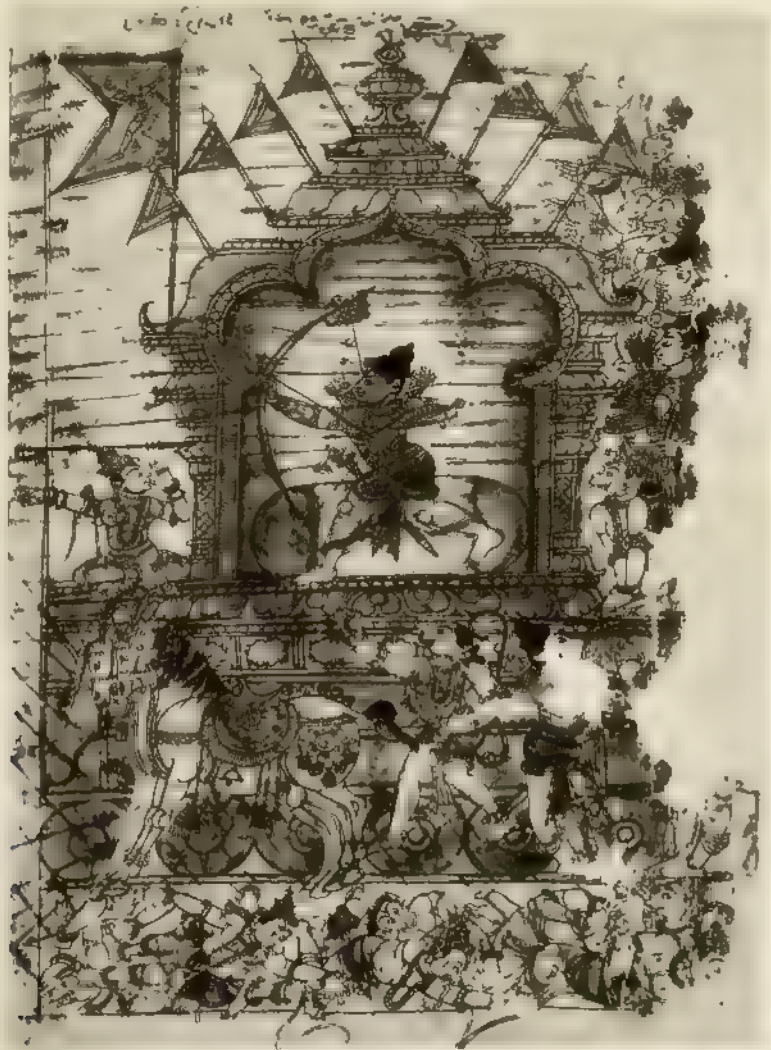
One of the enduring characteristics of Indian civilization is the rich diversity of cultural and social levels. In North India, Mughal and Rajput cultures clashed, co-existed and ultimately enriched each other. In the Deccan, Turco-Iranian schools of miniature painting flourished for centuries, nourished by the common Persianate culture of the Deccani sultans,

nobility and Mughal invaders. However, the Qutb Shahi dynasty never dispossessed the great Hindu land-owners and rajas of the countryside, known as *nayaks*, mainly of the Telugu-speaking Reddi and Vallama castes, descendants of the region's pre-Islamic rulers. The sultans integrated them into the Islamic state as tributary rulers, patronized their Telugu literature and even endowed Hindu temples.<sup>31</sup>

Powerful Hindu chiefs were especially numerous in the area south of the Krishna River and on the Andhra coast, east of Hyderabad. There, both landowners and large temples patronized an indigenous tradition of Hindu book painting, almost devoid of Islamic influences. A brilliantly exuberant drawing of Rama in the thick of battle, with Telugu captions, is by the same artist as a *Ramayana* manuscript in the State Museum, Hyderabad, from which this page may have been separated (192).<sup>32</sup> With a few rapid, confident strokes of the brush, cursory modelling around outlines and thin washes of colour, the artist deftly

191 (OPPOSITE) *Sultans of Golconda*  
Attributed here to Ali Reza  
Deccan, last quarter seventeenth century  
Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad

192. (RIGHT) *Rama's battle wagon*  
Deccan or Andhra, first half  
eighteenth century  
20.7 × 14.7 cm  
Private collection



suggests the excitement of battle as well as the mass and volume of the human body. The Hyderabad manuscript, which has ninety-three illustrations on hand-laid foreign paper, lacks a colophon, but it may have been executed by a painter connected with a large pilgrimage temple during the first half of the eighteenth century.<sup>33</sup> Very few examples of Hindu Deccani book painting have come to light, but they may exist, inaccessible, in the libraries of temples in southern India.

Even rarer is the large cloth painting in the Riboud Collection, Paris (193-94). Its subject has not been identified, but the scenes, arranged in three horizontal tiers, divided by South Indian architectural motifs, depict episodes in the life of a prince or deity. He leads a group of turbulent retainers (194), marches at the head of an armed procession and sits enthroned amid wives, courtiers and dancers. It is executed in the same technique as the painted cottons produced on the Golconda coast for Hindu patrons during the seventeenth century.<sup>34</sup>

Like the *Ramayana* illustrations in Hyderabad, the effect is of a line drawing, with strong colours, mainly green and red, on an uncoloured ground. The heavily shaded human body, in extremely vigorous poses, similarly forms the chief element of design, arranged in horizontal zones divided by architecture. However, the figures in the cotton painting have a more convincing sense of volume and weight, compared to the drier lines of the *Ramayana* pages, suggesting a slightly earlier date, perhaps in the late seventeenth century. Southern or eastern Andhra is the likeliest provenance.

Seven paintings from an unidentified Urdu manuscript, recently sold at auction in London, are a clear indication of the dispersal of artists from the royal Bijapur workshops at the close of the seventeenth century (195-96). The colophon of the manuscript, which has not been published, is reported to state that the manuscript, 'was written by [the author?] who "lived during the reign of Ali Adil Shah, under whom I grew prosperous"',<sup>35</sup>

Sultan Ali Adil Shah II (1656-72) was a relatively effective ruler and a keen patron of painting, but the reign of his son Sikandar (1672-86), who succeeded at the age of four, began a period of civil war that ended only with the Mughal capture of the kingdom (1686). Artists probably left the capital as early as the 1670s. Some must have received work at the fortress capitals of the great nobles, others surely went on to Hyderabad, where the great art patron Abul Hasan (1672-87) was ruling. Portraits of two of Abul Hasan's religious advisers, in a modified Bijapuri mode, have recently come to light (158-59).

During the following decades, the emerging Hyderabad style gradually absorbed the Bijapuri input. The paintings from the Urdu manuscript, probably painted in Hyderabad about 1700, are executed in a transitional mode showing partially assimilated Bijapuri and Golconda traits. In the painting of angels flying down to visit a sleeping princess (195), the women's large languorous eyes and dusky complexions derive from portraits of Sultan Ali Adil Shah II (107), while the turbulent line of the angels' descent and the fussy attention to detail are Golconda in origin. On another page, depicting a prince collapsing in the arms of a king (196), the tall vertical composition divided into three registers, based on seventeenth-century Golconda conventions, was destined to have a great vogue in eighteenth-century Hyderabad painting.

A large group of related paintings, now widely dispersed, was also executed in the Hyderabad region, probably during the first quarter of the eighteenth century.<sup>36</sup> The text is said to be a history of the Qutb Shahi dynasty, but a page in the Rietberg Museum, Zürich, which depicts a hero killing a demon with many arms and heads by means of a *chakra*, the





193. (ABOVE) *Episodes in the life of a prince or deity*  
A painting on cloth  
Deccan or Andhra, late  
seventeenth century  
155 X 202 cm  
Krishna Riboud Collection, Paris

194. (RIGHT) Detail of 193

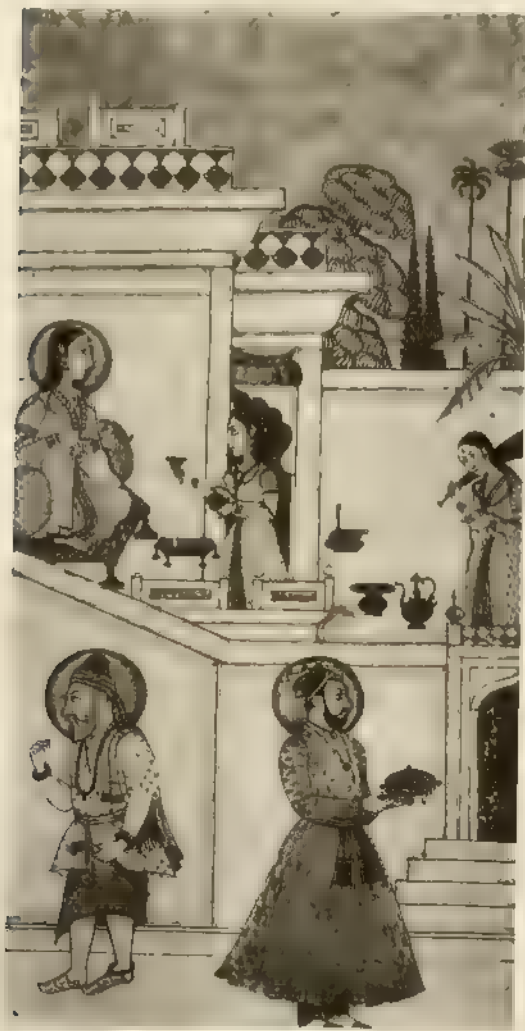




195. *Angels flying down to visit a princess,*  
a page from an unidentified Urdu manuscript  
Deccan, c. 1700  
39.5 × 23.5 cm  
Private collection



196. *A prince collapses in the arms of a king,*  
a page from an unidentified Urdu manuscript  
Deccan, c. 1700  
39.5 × 23.5 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego



197. *Attendants serving a princess*,  
a page from an unidentified manuscript  
Bidar (?), first quarter eighteenth century  
19 × 8.2 cm  
Custodia Foundation, Paris, 1970–T.7



198. *Hero beheading a demon*,  
a page from an unidentified manuscript  
Bidar (?), first quarter eighteenth century  
19 × 8.2 cm  
Rietberg Museum, Zürich

discus sacred to the god Vishnu and used as a weapon by Sikh warriors, suggests that the text is mythological rather than historical (198). The page in the Custodia Collection seems more conventionally Islamic (197). Other paintings, in the Binney and Walter Collections, bear the dates 1679, 1687 and 1709, as well as inscriptions referring to Abul Hasan Qutb Shah of Golconda (1672–87). The paintings must therefore date from 1709 or later

It would be odd if these similarly sized, but widely scattered, paintings depicting both Islamic history and Hindu legend, were used to illustrate the same manuscript. They may instead be the standardized production of a Deccani workshop, turning out illustrations for





199. *Paraj Ragini*  
Bidar (?), first quarter  
eighteenth century  
31.6 × 24 cm  
William Rockhill Nelson  
Gallery of Art, Kansas City,  
Missouri, 31-131/10

both Hindu and Muslim projects. They are, in fact, suitably impersonal and could illustrate several different themes. Their style, with its linear emphasis, thinly erect vegetation and muted colours, is a continuation of such remarkable seventeenth-century Golconda paintings as the *Berlin Sleeping girl* (168), the *Girl* (177) and the *Courtesan* (179), but unlike these earlier works, they often fall into dry academism.

The same workshop executed a grander project, a *ragamala* of impressive dimensions, only five pages of which have survived, preserved in the Nelson Gallery, Kansas City (199-202), and a private collection (203).<sup>37</sup> These paintings can be assigned to three different hands. *Paraj Ragini* (199), *Asavari Ragini* (200) and *Dhanasri Ragini* (202) are probably by the same artist. He has an aversion to mere prettiness, which so many eighteenth-century painters favoured. Unfortunately the simple shapes, which he prefers, are monotonously plain and his decorative detail is repetitive. The result is a stony bleakness with little feeling.



200. *Asavari Ragini*  
Bidar (?), first quarter eighteenth century  
31.6 × 24 cm  
William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art,  
Kansas City, Missouri, 31–131/11

The painter of the *Hindola Raga* (203) has a more original spirit and was also responsible for the small manuscript illustrations in the Custodia and Rietberg Collections (197–98). *Hindola Raga* is the visualization of a mode of Indian music meant to be sung in the morning and connected with spring. Yellow stains on the terrace recall the frenzied rites of *Holi*, the spring festival, when men and women douse each other with coloured water. *Hindola* means swing, and paintings of this *raga* often depict a young prince seated on a swing attended by beautiful women. Although the mood is formal and the colours are dark, tones of green, black and tan, gorgeous details compensate. We delight in the baroque bouquets of flowers, chirping red parrots and toy palm trees. But what makes this picture so powerful compared to its companions? Perhaps it is the bold diagonals leading towards the mysterious white castle on a hill, which provide a welcome escape from the rigidity of the terrace world.

*Ramkali Ragini*, by the third artist from the same workshop, differs from the other pages of



201 (ABOVE) *Ramkali Ragini*  
 Bidar (?), first quarter eighteenth century  
 31.6 × 24 cm  
 William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of Art,  
 Kansas City, Missouri, 31-131/9

XXI. (OPPOSITE) *Prince*  
*galloping across a rocky meadow*  
 Deccan, c.1700  
 29.3 × 19.4 cm  
 Private collection  
 See p. 212 and black and white illustration 183







xxii. *Allah-wirdi Khan receiving a petition*  
 Attributed here to the Jaipur painter  
 Hyderabad, early eighteenth century  
 34.6 × 25.5cm  
 City Palace Museum, Jaipur  
 See p. 237 and black and white illustration 209–10



202. *Dhanasri Ragini*  
Bidar (?), first quarter  
eighteenth century  
31.6 × 24 cm  
William Rockhill Nelson Gallery of  
Art, Kansas City, Missouri, 31–131/7

this group (201) Their hard formality has gone, replaced by tender romance. This *ragini* refers to a lady angry with her lover for dallying with another woman and arriving late for their tryst; he falls at her feet to beg forgiveness. The scene is tender, hushed and restrained. Romantically paired deer at the lovers' feet hint at secret joy. Pious ascetics, a dream city on a hill and slender trees murmur reconciliation.

None of these pages is signed or dated, but a provenance somewhere in the Hyderabad region during the first quarter of the eighteenth century is likely. It has been suggested that they were painted at Bidar,<sup>38</sup> the ancient Islamic capital of the Deccan, about one hundred and twenty five kilometres west of Hyderabad. The sweetly lyrical depiction of a girl with a fawn (204) comes from a widely dispersed series depicting beautiful girls holding small animals or children.<sup>39</sup> It is related to the Kansas City *ragamala* in its formal mood and dark tonalities, and may have been painted at the same centre.





203. *Hindola Raga*  
Bidar (?), first quarter eighteenth century  
31.6 × 24 cm  
Private collection





204. (ABOVE) *Girl holding a fawn*  
Deccan, first quarter eighteenth century  
20 × 15.3 cm  
Private collection  
205. (RIGHT) *Huntress*  
Northern Deccan, c. 1700  
29.5 × 20.4 cm  
Ismail Merchant Collection, New York



Many Mughal and Rajput noblemen in the Mughal Deccan hardly experienced the formal court life mirrored by such paintings as *Hindola Raga*. They spent their lives in vast military camps pursuing Maratha bands and besieging their strongholds. Camp life, although impermanent, was not spartan. Officers were often accompanied by their families, as well as tradesmen, artisans, painters and poets. A mixed style of painting developed there, resulting from the intermingling of Rajput, Mughal and Deccani painters and patrons. Rajput influence was especially strong in the northern Deccan around the Mughal administrative capitals of Aurangabad and Burhanpur, both cities had been in Mughal hands since the early seventeenth century.<sup>40</sup>

The fierce Deccani huntress in the Merchant Collection, is probably not the daughter of the Mughal emperor Farrukh-Siyar (1713–19) as the Persian inscription states (205).<sup>41</sup> She resembles paintings of Queen Chand Bibi of Ahmadnagar, the doomed defender of her city against the Mughals in 1600, whose heroic exploits passed into Deccani legend. Despite the



Islamic connection, she has the fierce folk qualities of Rajput representations of the Hindu goddess Durga slaying the buffalo demon. A date of c. 1700 and a provenance in the northern Deccan, near Aurangabad, are probable.

The jewel-like little portrait of a nobleman on horseback hawking, attended by armed followers and a hound, in the Rietberg Museum, Zurich, dazzles by its colour (206). Except for a few areas of brown and white for the horse's hide and the servants' clothes, the picture is almost entirely in a vivid emerald green, evoking the coolness of a garden rather than the parched Deccan plateau. The Persian inscription identifies the hunter as Ali Asghar Khan Bahadur. He was a Golconda nobleman, born in Iran, who remained faithful to Sultan Abul Hasan during Aurangzeb's siege of Golconda in 1687. Later the victorious emperor rewarded his fidelity to the losing side by making him chief executive of the Mughal Karnatik, south of Hyderabad.<sup>42</sup> This picture may be a posthumous portrait from the early eighteenth century, though an earlier dating cannot be ruled out.

Rigid poses and meticulous technique, borrowed from Mughal portraiture, characterize many early eighteenth-century paintings, as if formality could compensate for social turbulence and political instability. Nizam al Mulk (1724–48), pacifier of the Marathas and unifier of the Deccan, had not yet taken power, but already figures are stiffly upright, like attendants



206. (LEFT) *Ali Asghar Khan Bahadur out hawking*  
Deccan, early eighteenth century  
22 × 21 cm  
Rietberg Museum, Zürich

207. (OPPOSITE, LEFT)  
*Prince smelling a rose*  
Deccan, early eighteenth century  
28 × 17.5 cm  
National Museum,  
New Delhi, 58.39/5

208. (OPPOSITE, RIGHT)  
*Mujahid Jang and Murassa Bai*  
*sitting in a garden*  
Attributed here to the  
Jaipur painter  
Hyderabad, early  
eighteenth century  
22.9 × 17.1 cm  
Private collection





at an imaginary *darbar*. The fantasy of earlier Deccani painting persists, no longer in line or composition, but in rich colour and bizarre detail.

The young prince sniffing a rose in the National Museum, New Delhi, seems as perfumed as the garden he admires (207).<sup>43</sup> Standing before a yellow-green background, he wears a cream and purple *jama* with a red and gold turban. Huge gold butterflies sip nectar from giant irises, similar, except for their size, to the more realistic flowers on the prince's coat. Despite outward conformity to Mughal costume and composition, the effect is as lyrically intense as Bijapuri painting of a century before.

Another early eighteenth-century artist, almost certainly working at Hyderabad, carries sharp-edged draughtsmanship and Mughal sobriety to Deccani extremes. In the portrait of a Mughal nobleman and a lady seated in a garden, inscribed with the names Mujahid Jang<sup>44</sup> and Murassa Bai, symmetry and balance, once linked to Mughal realism, become abstract ends in themselves, as in the work of Poussin or Mondrian (208).<sup>45</sup> The result is an uneasy alliance between severity and opulence. Colours are strong: the carpet is maroon and gold, the garden bright green and the sky gold streaked with blue.





209. (OPPOSITE) *Allah-wirdi Khan receiving a petition*  
 Attributed here to the Jaipur painter  
 Hyderabad, early eighteenth century  
 34.6 × 25.5 cm  
 City Palace Museum, Jaipur, A.G. 656  
 See col. pl. xxii on p. 230

210. (LEFT) Detail of 209

Despite its more 'official' subject, the portrait of a Mughal nobleman receiving a petition, in the Jaipur Museum, by the same artist, is much more romantic (209–10 and col. pl. xxii).<sup>46</sup> Colours are more intense, vegetation freer and the figures comprise a brilliant assortment of complexions, physical types and personalities. The artist's attitude towards nature is like that of a Persian poet of the Mughal period: conventional, yet capable of surprisingly real observation. The attendants, birds, butterflies and deer are in 'typical' poses, distilled – but not copied – from nature.

The inscription on the verso identifies the nobleman as Allah-wirdi Khan. A mansabdar by this name served Aurangzeb during the Deccan campaigns; he was a good poet, of Iranian origin, with a *divan* to his credit.<sup>47</sup> No information is given about the artist or the provenance of the painting. A third painting can be attributed to this artist, whom we may call the Jaipur painter. It is a smaller, less ambitious portrait of a swarthy nobleman seated on a terrace, attended by two servants, in the Custodia Collection, Paris.<sup>48</sup> The effect of sombre opulence, heightened by bits of beetle wing pasted onto the page to represent jewellery, is identical.

A fourth painting in the Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares, considerably less refined, depicting a young lady with her *duenna* is also by the same hand. It bears an interesting inscription on the reverse, which mentions Hyderabad as its city of origin, thereby supplying the provenance for the other three paintings by this artist. In *devanagari* script, the inscription gives the patron as well: 'The gift of Purushottamdas, son of Damodardas in the city of Bhagnagar [Hyderabad].'<sup>49</sup>

The formal Hyderabad style found echoes at the smaller courts of Hindu rajas and Muslim nawabs. Shortly after 1700, a Pathan general in Aurangzeb's service established himself as a





211. (ABOVE) *Prince Ghulam Hazrat Akbar Khan Bahadur and courtiers*  
Kurnool, first half eighteenth century  
35 × 45 cm  
Musée Guimet, Paris, M.A. 3743

212. (LEFT) Detail of 211  
213. (BELOW) Detail of 211



semi-independent feudatory, or nawab, at Kurnool, an historic town about one hundred and seventy five kilometres south of Hyderabad.<sup>50</sup> Although Kurnool owed allegiance to the nizam at Hyderabad during the eighteenth century, in the seventeenth century it had been part of Bijapur, under the governorship of an hereditary line of African jagirdars, who were among the most powerful nobles at court.

In 1683, Siddi Masud, governor of Kurnool and regent of Sultan Sikandar Bijapuri, retired from the capital to Adoni, the principal fort of the Kurnool district, where he ruled independently until 1689. In that year, he surrendered to the Mughal general Anup Singh, maharaja of Bikaner.<sup>51</sup> His sudden capture of Adoni revealed that Siddi Masud had been an avid collector of painting, and probably a great patron of the arts, for the loot included such vitally important Bijapuri paintings as the processional portrait of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1579-1627), which had doubtless formed part of the royal library at Bijapur (50).

The Kurnool school of painting relates not only to contemporary Hyderabad trends but to seventeenth-century Bijapuri portraiture as well. This connection suggests that Bijapuri painters had accompanied Siddi Masud to Kurnool in 1683 and founded a school of painting, which continued to be patronized by the Pathan nawabs during the eighteenth century.

Very few paintings can be attributed to Kurnool. The earliest, and perhaps the greatest, is the large *darbar* scene depicting Ghulam Hazrat Akbar Khan Bahadur with six courtiers, in the Musée Guimet, Paris (211-13).<sup>52</sup> *Nastaliq* inscriptions identify the noblemen facing the prince as Muhammad Akbar Khan, Hoshdar Khan and Hasan Muhammad; behind him are Osman Khan, Hafiz Lutfullah and Ghulam Muhammad, who bears the fly whisk (212). The plain white surfaces, the figures' massive physiques and the arrangement of kneeling courtiers around a central prince, relaxing against a huge bolster, recall Bijapuri portraiture.

The prince, Ghulam Hazrat Akbar Khan Bahadur, may have been a close relative of the ruler, for his name is not identical to that of any reigning nawab. The connection with Kurnool comes out in the ornament. The arabesque of the carpets (212), as well as the garden foliage at the top of the page, alive with birds, butterflies and squirrels (213), are executed in thick gesso-like paint, built up in low relief and varnished. Now, Kurnool was actually a centre for the manufacture of lacquerware.<sup>53</sup> Papier-maché fans, trays and boxes were decorated in low relief with ornament identical to the detail in this picture. Miniature painters at Kurnool were probably responsible only for the figures and general composition of paintings, while artisans from the lacquer industry meticulously filled in decorative detail. The deep blue sky streaked with gold, behind fern-like palm fronds, at the top of the Guimet page (213), is so like the portrait of Allah-wirdi Khan (209 and col. pl. xxii) that its date cannot be later than the first half of the eighteenth century, even accounting for provincial archaism.

A second large *darbar* scene, depicting a provincial Muslim ruler, in the Rietberg Museum, Zürich, was also probably executed in the Kurnool area (214). The pink and green floral arabesque on the carpet and the tiny *grisaille* detail on the pavilions is again like surviving examples of Kurnool lacquerware. Both Mahmud Khan Dawudi, smoking a bidri *huqqa*, and his son-in-law, Abd al Razzaq Khan, facing him, wear white, while to the left Bandi Khan Dawudi is dressed in bright orange. Huge bouquets of orange flowers sprout from porcelain vases on the terrace, against a vivid blue background. This dazzling, provincial earthiness, like a patchwork village quilt, contrasts with the classical restraint of the Guimet painting.

The names of the figures, inscribed above each man as in a cartoon strip, again do not correspond to any reigning Kurnool nawab. It is possible that lesser Muslim noblemen in the



214. (ABOVE) *Mahmud Khan Dawudi and his son-in-law Abd al Razzaq Khan with courtiers*  
Kurnool, first half eighteenth century  
25 × 33 cm  
Rietberg Museum, Zürich

215. (LEFT) *Qadir Dad Khan*  
*Let's listening to music*  
Hyderabad, early eighteenth century  
27 × 21.5 cm  
Rietberg Museum, Zürich

216. (OPPOSITE) *Prince receiving water from girls at a well*  
Hyderabad, early eighteenth century  
27.5 × 35 cm  
Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection, Bombay





district employed Kurnool painters to do their portraits. The shape of the round bidri *huqqa*, popular during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century, suggests a date prior to 1750.

A portrait of a nobleman listening to a concert on the roof of a lake-side pavilion, in the Rietberg Museum, Zürich, is in the sleekly elegant style of metropolitan Hyderabad painting (215). His name, inscribed on the painting, is Qadir Dad Khan Leti; a Turkman officer of that name served in the Deccan under Aurangzeb during the late seventeenth century.<sup>54</sup> Beneath him, in the *zenana*, his wife, dressed in red and gold, also listens to music, guarded by an African 'amazon'. Two girls in a boat, resembling the *yoginis* of early seventeenth-century Bijapur painting, observe the sun's reflection in the fish-filled lake. Strong greens, glowing reds and a dark blue sky produce a richer effect than most Mughal paintings of the Aurangzeb period, to which this page is closely related.

Although the large painting depicting a prince receiving water from girls at a well, in the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection, Bombay, has been described as 'provincial Mughal, c. 1715', it is more likely to be Deccani, or by a Deccani artist working in northern India (216).<sup>55</sup> The composition has the dense, pulsating vitality and the colours the sombre glow which distinguish both the Golconda and Hyderabad schools. While the prince quenches his thirst, girls swing from the trees, ducks and geese splash about, musicians serenade a holyman and animals race by, frightened by a hunter, beneath rolling monsoon clouds.

Comparable paintings exist, of definite Deccani provenance. In the large cloth painting of





217. *Lady languishing on a terrace*  
Hyderabad, first half  
eighteenth century  
24 × 14.9 cm  
Private collection

about 1700, which depicts Prince Azam Shah approaching Golconda fort, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, the composition is divided horizontally into several zones, as here, by lines of rocks and trees.<sup>56</sup> The cloth painting of Nizam Salabat Jang of Hyderabad (1751–62) returning home from bird shooting, in the Mittal Museum, Hyderabad, is even closer in composition and probably in date.<sup>57</sup>

As the eighteenth century progresses, Deccani artists increasingly turn to depicting 'escapist' themes such as the opulent life of ideally beautiful courtesans, or princes who are often mere masks of power and wealth. Although the energy and humanism of seventeenth-century work is now gone, certain paintings are still lyrical. The love-sick lady languishing on a terrace, attended by her maids, in a private collection (217), is as bewitchingly beautiful as a courtesan by Boucher.<sup>58</sup> This painting may be a later work by the artist responsible for the portraits of Mujahid Jang (208) and Allah-wirdi Khan (209 and col. pl. xxii), or by a pupil, though the gripping severity of the earlier works has evaporated. The courtesan's idealized beauty and gentle eroticism set the tone for painting during the reign of Asaf Jah, the first nizam of Hyderabad (1724–48), resuscitator of Deccani independence.



## NOTES

1. Sarkar (1963), p. 286.
2. In the late seventeenth century, the six Deccani provinces of the Mughal empire had a standard revenue of 160 million rupees as against 170 million from the other twelve provinces of the empire taken together. See Sarkar *The Cambridge History of India* vol. IV (reprinted 1963), p. 378.
3. See p. 198.
4. See pp. 213-15.
5. See pp. 201-7 and 215-18.
6. Richards, pp. 53-54.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 55-56.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 61.
9. *Ibid.*, ch. V.
10. Sainsbury Museum, Norwich. Sotheby's, London, 11 July 1973, lot 107.
11. Skelton (1961), pls 15, 50.
12. Archer, W. G. (1973), vol. II, Chamba, fig. 1; Bilaspur, fig. 6; Mandi, fig. 6.
13. Private collection. Previously unpublished.
14. i.s. 35-1957. Previously unpublished.
15. 1937 9-20 06. Previously unpublished.
16. Khandalavala and Chandra (1965), no. 61.
17. As in his splendid portrait of Maharaja Abhai Singh of Jodhpur (Gray (1950), pl. 91). A pendant to this painting, by the same artist, of the same ruler, is in a private collection.
18. A substantial number of Deccani paintings have emerged which bear Kishangarh mounts (see p. 143, (111)).
19. 50. 14/14. Previously unpublished.
20. Goetz (1950), caption pl. II.
21. See pp. 207 and 239.
22. i.s. 57-1949. Previously unpublished. Two officers named Salabat Jang are known to have served Aurangzeb in the Deccan. See M. Athar Ali, pp. 241, 244.
23. Twelve pages published in Sarabhai.
24. *Marg* March 1963, col. pl. on p. 20.
25. Written by the Muslim poet Babullah in Deccani Urdu for Mian Diler Khan, a nobleman in Aurangzeb's service. See Sarabhai, preface.
26. Private collection. Previously unpublished. An almost identical version of this painting is in the Goenka Collection, Bombay.
27. Soustiel and David (1974), p. 37.
28. Khandalavala, Chandra and Chandra, pl. E.
29. M.S.P. 683. Ashraf, p. 40.
30. He worked on the *Mathnavi* of Zafar Khan, a poet and nobleman during the reign of Shah Jahan and Aurangzeb. The manuscript, illustrated at Lahore in 1663, is in the British Library, London, on loan from the Royal Asiatic Society. Pinder-Wilson (1957), pp. 418-22.
31. Richards, ch. 1.
32. Private collection. Welch (1976), no. 3.
33. Mittal (1969).
34. Irwin; Irwin and Brett; Irwin and Hall.
35. Christie's, London, 11 October 1979, lots 183-89. Only the manuscript's seven illustrations were published in the catalogue and sold at auction, not the text or the colophon page.
36. At least thirty illustrations have so far come to light, in the collections of the Red Fort Museum, Delhi; the Peshawar Museum, Peshawar; the Rietberg Museum, Zürich; the Custodia Foundation, Paris, Paul Walter and Edwin Binney 3rd. Binney (1973), no. 148.
37. Welch (1973), no. 82.
38. Jagdish Mittal in a letter to the author.
39. Sotheby's, London, 11 July 1972, lot 68.
40. See pp. 46-50.
41. Welch (1973), no. 80.
42. Richards, p. 55.
43. 58. 39/5. Previously unpublished.
44. Two officers by this name served Aurangzeb in the Deccan. See M. Athar Ali, pp. 208, 235.
45. Falk, Digby and Goedhuis, no. 39.
46. Das (1976), pl. 2.
47. M. Athar Ali, p. 167.
48. Custodia Foundation, no. 143 (not illustrated).
49. Khandalavala, Chandra and Chandra, no. 158. Formerly in the Khajanchi Collection, Bikaner. A fifth painting by this artist, of a girl beneath a tree, is illustrated by Spink & Son Ltd, London, in their 1982 Islamic catalogue.
50. For the history of Kurnool, see Chetty, pp. 28-41.
51. Sarkar (1963), pp. 284, 290.
52. M.A. 3743. Previously unpublished.
53. Not the true lacquerware of Japan and Burma, consisting of layers of lacquer applied to a surface and then carved, but instead painted and varnished gesso. The decoration usually consisted of minute arabesque filled with figures of birds, butterflies and squirrels. See Birdwood, pl. 67.
54. M. Athar Ali, p. 206.
55. Khandalavala and Chandra (1965), no. 48.
56. Kramrisch, pl. xxii.
57. Mittal (1963), p. 23.
58. Sotheby's, London, 14 July 1971, lot 128.



## Hyderabad and the provinces, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries

**T**HE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY was politically unstable throughout India. The Mughal empire, which had annexed the Deccani kingdoms with great effort at the close of the seventeenth century, was exhausted and impoverished. Everywhere Mughal officers fought each other and the emperor at Delhi, to carve out independent kingdoms, while paying lip service to the fiction of centralized authority. The Marathas continued to hack at Islamic rule in peninsular India, while rapidly expanding into the north.

In the Deccan, the Mughal viceroy, Nizam al Mulk, one of the most capable Mughal administrators of the century, a pious hard-working aristocrat of Aurangzebian tenacity, grew disgusted with the anarchy of Emperor Muhammad Shah's rule (1719-48). After several attempts to reform his master's government at Delhi, he left North India in 1724 and within the year had brought the entire Mughal Deccan within his personal control. The emperor recognized his conquests in the following year by bestowing upon him the title of Asaf Jah.<sup>1</sup>

The Asafiya dynasty, which he founded, ruled the Deccan from Hyderabad for more than two centuries, until 1950, when the tenth and last nizam relinquished power. The conservative nizams preserved the Mughal traditions of their ancestors and the ancient Persianate culture of the Deccan until well into the twentieth century. Asaf Jah's firm rule (1724-48) brought relative peace to the region after decades of turmoil. Although state revenues throughout India had seriously declined during the eighteenth century because of political anarchy, he had inherited the richest part of the Mughal empire: during Aurangzeb's rule (1658-1707), the six Deccani provinces had had a standard revenue of 160 million rupees as against 170 million from the other twelve provinces of the Mughal empire combined.<sup>2</sup> The nizam's court at Hyderabad, shifted at times to Aurangabad, provided a cultured and relatively wealthy centre of artistic patronage.

None of Asaf Jah's descendants were as talented at governing as he. After his death (1748), power struggles developed among the English, French, Marathas and the nizams, which shattered the delicate political balance and drained princely treasuries, until Hyderabad became a British dependency in 1800. The kingdom survived as a protected bastion of Islamic culture for the next century and a half. Throughout the eighteenth century, and well into the nineteenth, miniature painting continued, though increasingly dry and repetitive after 1800. The chief patrons were the nizams and their Muslim and Hindu nobles. Feudatory princes at Kurnool, Gadwal, Shorapur, and probably elsewhere, also patronized artists, who

sometimes painted with greater originality than at the capital. Finally the ninth nizām, Mahbub Ali Khan (1869–1911) turned to a talented photographer, Lala Deen Dayal, to record the personalities and events of his reign, creating a taste for photography which effectively killed the moribund tradition of painting.<sup>3</sup>

The unsettled conditions of the eighteenth century brought about a transformation in the character of Deccanī painting. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the powerful leaders of great Muslim states, inspiring awe and respect, provided the natural subject matter of art. Penetrating studies of princes, dervishes and courtiers resulted. Although these were less realistic than Mughal portraits, they pulsate with the personalities and moods of their subjects. Yet this passion for portraiture was actually a short-lived aberration in the long history of Indian art. The Indian artist had invariably concentrated on the rhythms and energy of the nude to depict deities, not people. The curvaceous female form was especially favoured, deriving from ancient icons of fertility spirits. These earthy symbols of the gods give Indian art and poetry its unique blend of the sacred and the erotic, apparent opposites to the western mind.

Eighteenth-century Deccanī artists suddenly rediscover the female body, creating an idealized world of princesses and courtesans (218–19, 221–23). The feminine principle, whether called *devī*, *śakhti*, *yoginī* or *raginī*, re-emerges, considerably Islamicized of course, reaffirming the continuity of Indian culture through centuries of Muslim rule. Male portraiture continues, but the subjects rarely move us, resembling cardboard cut-outs. The painter Venkatchellam, for example, who painted a Hyderabad nobleman relaxing in a garden, c.1800, concentrates upon vibrant colours and fine detail (242). The result is like an extraordinary piece of inlaid enamel, but the man behind the façade has vanished. How different is the awesomely intimate vision of the sultan of Ahmadnagar painted two centuries before (4 and col. pl. II).

With the rediscovery of feminine charm, an unfortunate tendency towards superficial effects of mere prettiness develops. As in contemporary French painting, we see coquettish young girls striking lovesick poses (221), or performing their *toilette* (239). Some of these paintings are moving (223), and a few portraits touch the heights scaled by seventeenth-century work (234, 247 and col. pls xxiii–xxiv). In general, however, political disorder and financial bankruptcy kept princely patrons from becoming brilliant patrons.

Moreover, India began to be bombarded with philosophic and artistic influences from the West, resulting from European colonization on her coasts, to which she was not yet able to adjust. The eighteenth century should not, however, be seen as culturally sterile. If the period was devoid of brilliant kings, it still produced brilliant writers.<sup>4</sup> They seemed to thrive on adversity, producing a new golden age of Urdu and Persian literature. And although eighteenth-century painting lacks the strength of earlier work, it achieves a gentle new mood in a minor key.

The princess seated on a chair, attended by handmaidens, in the Baroda Museum (218),<sup>5</sup> recalls the style of Allah-wirdi Khan's portrait, in the Jaipur City Palace Museum (209 and col. pl. xxii). Objects and people are stiffly arranged like bouquets of dried flowers. Dark faces and shades of tan, mauve, green and white so resemble the Jaipur artist's conventions, that the miniature may be either by him, in old age, or by a lesser artist in the same workshop. The fine *nastaliq* inscription identifying the princess as a daughter of the Emperor Jahangir (1605–27) is a bit of romantic fiction.



218. (ABOVE, LEFT) *Princess sitting on a chair (detail)*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
26.2 × 20 cm  
Baroda Museum, P.G. 5d. 3

219. (ABOVE, RIGHT) *Lady with a pet cat*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay

220. (LEFT) *Nawab smoking a hugga*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
Private collection





xxiii. *Sadashiv Rao,*  
*called the Bhao Sahib*  
*Maratha, c.1750-60*  
 Kelkar Museum, Poona  
 See p 258 and black and white illustration 234



xxiv. *Munir al Mulk, called Aristu Jah*  
 Attributed here to Venkatchellam  
 Hyderabad, c.1810

32.7 x 25.4cm  
 Victoria and Albert Museum, London  
 See p. 268 and black and white illustration 247





221. *Lady with two musicians*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
22.5 × 14.8 cm  
Prince of Wales Museum,  
Bombay, 22.3409

The lady with a pet cat, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, is gentler (219).<sup>6</sup> However, the hard, enamel-green background and the chased silver water, like engraved steel, so resemble the Baroda painting that the same workshop may be responsible, if not the same hand. The delicate portrait of a Deccani nawab, in a private collection, smoking from a beautiful gilt *huqqa*, is also closely related (220).<sup>7</sup>

A Deccani beauty, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, serenaded by a singer and musician, charms with her elegant, spatially illogical pose and large, languorous eyes (221).<sup>8</sup> Colour and decorative detail are again identical to the Baroda painting (218). Six life-size paintings of beautiful women on cloth, possibly symbolizing the seasons, in the City Palace Museum, Jaipur, are by the same artist, but more impressive in scale and design.<sup>9</sup> Said to have entered the Royal Jaipur Collection in 1753, they were probably painted ten or twenty years before at Hyderabad. A *ragamala* set in the Art Collection, Kankroh,<sup>10</sup> and two or three other dispersed sets are drier, less opulent versions of this workshop's style, perhaps produced for patrons of more limited means.<sup>11</sup>





222. (LEFT) *Two women beneath a tree*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
14 × 13.3 cm  
Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, 22.3482

223. (OPPOSITE) *Lovesick lady*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
21.5 × 15 cm  
India Office Library, London, 422

The painting of two women offering each other wine, perfume and flowers beneath a splendid tree, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay (222), is in a different style.<sup>12</sup> The women's faces are not heavily shaded in southern taste, suggesting that the artist was a North Indian. He has, however, adopted certain Hyderabad traits like the primly drawn flower bed and the tangle of clouds. Although his drawing is stiff, the gracefully arching tree, bearing blossoms like jewels on a chain, injects drama and fantasy.

Another painter, or workshop, more in the mainstream of Hyderabad taste, produced a series of romantic pictures during the first half of the eighteenth century. The masterpiece of this group is the *Lovesick lady* in the India Office Library, London (223).<sup>13</sup> There can be little doubt about the cause of her mood: her lover has not come; an elderly servant tries to soothe her feelings, while servant girls hover uneasily about. Oblivious to them, the lady stares unhappily ahead, dressed in bright orange and green, lying on a pink mattress. Undecorated expanses of dark violet-blue evoke solitude and depression.

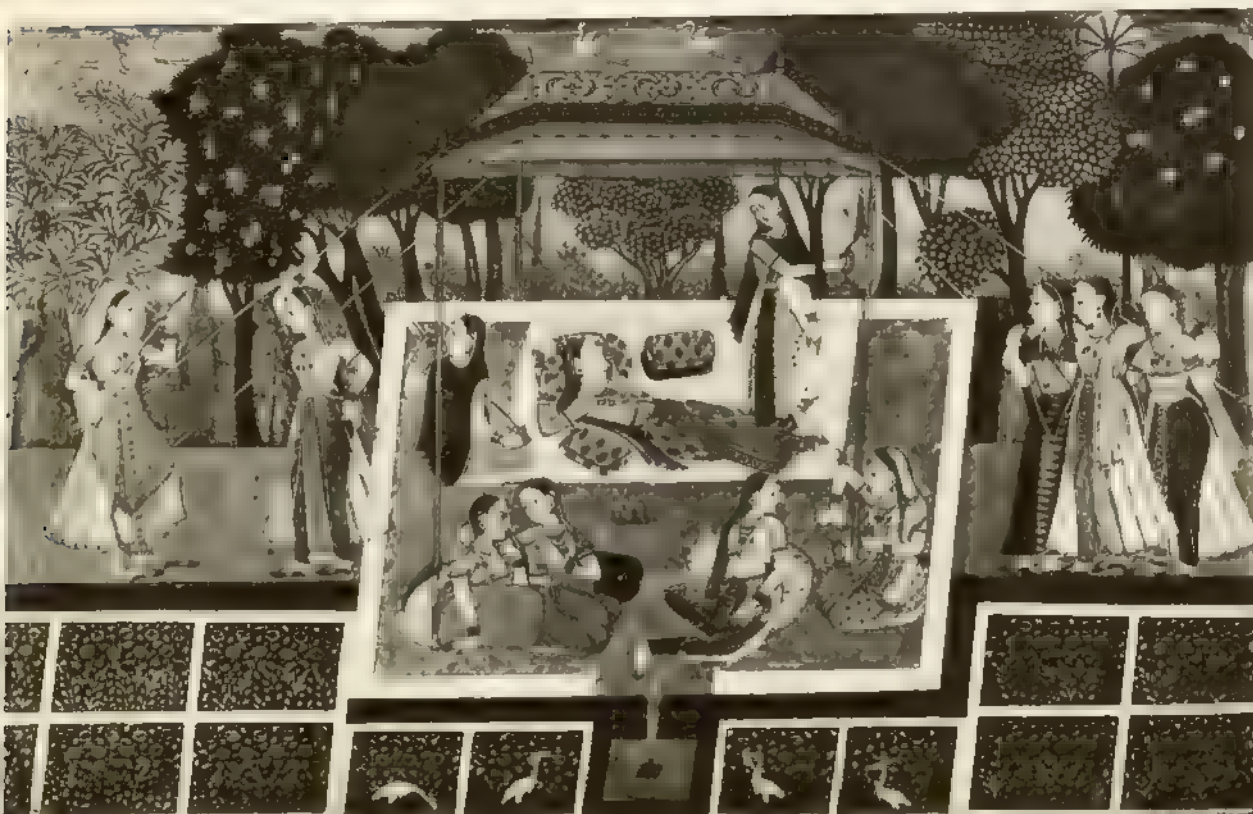
The portrait of Shah Jahan attended by two courtiers, in the Binney Collection, is probably by the same group of artists (224).<sup>14</sup> Two women, peeping from harem windows at the emperor, resembling the figures of the India Office Library painting, provide a similar mood of passion. Other pages from this series, portraits of Mughal emperors and courtiers, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, bear identifying inscriptions on the reverse in English and in Telugu, the language of the Hindu population of Hyderabad.





224. (LEFT) *Shah Jahan enthroned*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
33.4 × 22.3 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego

225. (BELOW) *Ladies carousing in a garden*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
20 × 31 cm  
Archer Collection, London





Eighteenth-century painters rarely delved into the personalities of their subjects. Patrons seemed satisfied with records of life's glittering moments, perhaps as a refuge from financial strains and political anarchy. The result can be both frivolous and lyrical, as in the splendid painting of ladies carousing in a garden, in the Archer Collection (225).<sup>15</sup> Far from life's problems, the ladies enjoy music, wine and conversation. Delicate harmonies of mauve, white and green charm our senses. This painting and a slightly different version in the Sir Cowasji Jehangir Collection, Bombay,<sup>16</sup> are both by the artist or the workshop responsible for the *Lovesick lady* in the India Office Library (223). Another painting of ladies carousing under a garden tent, recently on the London art market, is identical in style, though the figures are slightly drier (226).<sup>17</sup>

226. *Ladies carousing in a garden*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
23.5 x 16 cm  
Colnaghi Gallery, London



The last phase of this workshop's activity is probably the dispersed *ragamala*, formerly in the Kevorkian Collection, New York. One of its most striking pages is *Kakubha Ragini*, in the Rietberg Museum, Zürich (227).<sup>18</sup> The face of the *ragini* is identical to that of the *Lovesick lady* (223), though the drawing of her body and of the background, is stiff in comparison. A splendid painting of a prince on a hennaed white horse, spying on seven naked ladies bathing in a rocky pool, is probably the most ambitious painting to have survived from this workshop. Although brilliant in detail, the composition is weak because of the unusually large size.<sup>19</sup>

After 1750 the bold eroticism of such paintings as *Kakubha Ragini* changes. Figures become delicately sinuous; a taste for lighter, more thinly applied colour replaces its dark palette. The finest example of this new mode is the *ragamala* set in the India Office Library, called the Johnson *ragamala* (228–29), which conjures up a fantastic world of delicate colours and seductive figures.<sup>20</sup> Rarely has the sensuous imagery of Persian and Indian poetry achieved such appropriate visual expression; appropriate, yet still an art in decline, for figures are not only conventional, but repetitive. Each face and flower, elegant symbol of perfection though it is, is like every other. Looking at a few pages of this set is exciting, but seeing them all is cloying.



227. (LEFT) *Kakubha Ragini*  
Hyderabad, first half eighteenth century  
21.8 × 14.7 cm  
Rietberg Museum, Zürich

228. (OPPOSITE, LEFT) *Lady listening to a musician*, an unidentified *ragini*  
Hyderabad, third quarter eighteenth century  
24 × 15 cm  
India Office Library, London, 426 (ix)

229. (OPPOSITE, RIGHT) *Lalita Ragini*  
Hyderabad, third quarter eighteenth century  
24 × 15 cm  
India Office Library, London, 426 (viii)



The *ragamala*'s connection with poetic symbolism is not surprising, for its owner was Richard Johnson, British resident at Hyderabad (1784–85). He had arrived in Calcutta in 1770, and there his interest in Indian culture had brought him into contact with Warren Hastings and Sir Elijah Impey, collector and patron of Indian painting. Before coming to Hyderabad, he had been posted to Lucknow for two years where he became friendly with the Swiss engineer Antoine Polier, an important collector of Indian miniatures,<sup>21</sup> and the Frenchman Claude Martin. Johnson was familiar with Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit. With regard to painting, he was more interested in literary content than aesthetic expression, and he was fascinated by the connection between Indian art and music.<sup>22</sup> The India Office *ragamala*, which he probably acquired while in Hyderabad, must have appealed to him because of its delicate evocation of Persian poetical symbolism.

Two of the finest pages of the set are the *Lady listening to a musician* (228) and *Lalita Ragini* (229). In the former page the stark white terrace contrasts beautifully with the bright colours





of the garden flowers. Cypress trees, symbols of the Divine Beloved's graceful stature in Persian mystical poetry, frame the heroine against a deep blue sky. In *Lalita Ragini* (229) the night's stillness is conveyed with moving intensity as a prince tenderly takes leave of his dozing mistress. The European perspective of the architectural setting probably derives from western paintings and prints in the nizam's collection. He may have acquired them from the French officers who very nearly made the Deccan a French colony in the 1750s, before their defeat by the British in the 1760s.

The Johnson *ragamala* is not dated but was probably painted in the third quarter of the eighteenth century. The same artist was responsible for the *Princess hunting with her ladies* in the Victoria and Albert Museum (230).<sup>23</sup> Its palette, foliage and figures are similar except that the execution is slightly coarser. It, in turn, is related to a large painting on cloth in the Mittal Museum, Hyderabad, depicting Nizam Salabat Jang (1751-62) and his wife returning to their palace after bird-shooting.<sup>24</sup> In the lower right-hand of the painting an attendant, shooting at a deer, steadies his gun on a tree limb just like the princess in the London page. Both figures were probably executed with the same pounce. *Todi Ragini*, in the Binney Collection, is also related, but its robust spirit indicates the hand of a different painter in the same workshop (231).<sup>25</sup>

A beautiful lady grasping the branch of a tree, like a *yakshini* of ancient Indian sculpture, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, probably dates from the mid eighteenth century, although the possibility of an earlier date cannot be excluded (232).<sup>26</sup> A parrot, symbol of sweetness and beauty in Indian and Islamic literature, perches on her finger. A Rajasthani version of this picture, in the National Gallery of Victoria, depicting the same lady standing alone, in a somewhat drier style, bears the signature of the painter, Incha Ram.<sup>27</sup> This artist may have begun his career in the Deccan, where he painted the Victoria and Albert miniature with a strong Deccani sense of fantasy and a typically southern palette of deep greens and blues, and then later worked for Rajasthani patrons in an earthier mode.

A radiant young woman, dressed in diaphanous robes of red and gold, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, stretches to flaunt her seductive charms (233).<sup>28</sup> We half expect the giant butterflies, hovering above enormous white and purple flowers, to pollmate her as well, so pungent is she with love. Strongly related to the figures of the Johnson *ragamala* (228-29), though fresher and more original than they, this minor erotic masterpiece must also date from the third quarter of the eighteenth century.

Even before the advent of French and English power in the second half of the eighteenth century, the nizams were not in firm control of the Deccan. The Hindu Marathas possessed huge areas of the northern, southern and western Deccan and continually threatened the very existence of the Hyderabad kingdom. The Maratha state, with centres at Satara, Kolhapur and Poona, cities south-east of Bombay, was a loose confederacy of semi-independent chiefs: the Maratha emperor, a descendant of Shivaji, reigned at Satara; another branch of the family ruled at Poona; but the real ruler was the hereditary peshwa, or prime minister, at Poona. Other Maratha chiefs, who had been sent out to collect tribute from the nizam or from the Mughal provinces in North India, gradually assumed a certain independence from Satara. They were Raghuji Bhonsle at Nagpur and, in Malwa, Udaji Powar, Malhar Rao Holkar and Ranoji Sindia, founders of the royal houses of Dhar, Indore and Gwalior.

By the mid eighteenth century, the Marathas had inflicted several devastating defeats upon the kingdom of Hyderabad and had extracted important forts and territory. In the 1750s the



230 (ABOVE) *Princess hunting with her ladies*  
Hyderabad, third quarter eighteenth century  
17.8 × 29.2 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London,  
I.S. 157-1952

231. (RIGHT) *Todi Ragini*  
Hyderabad, third quarter eighteenth century  
24 × 15 cm  
Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego





Marathas were collecting tribute all over the Deccan and North India, westwards to Punjab and eastwards to Bengal and Orissa. Maratha expansion received a deadly blow from the Afghan invader, Ahmad Shah Abdali, who crushed a Mughal-Maratha alliance at the battle of Panipat near Delhi in 1761. Although the Maratha state continued well into the nineteenth century, the power of the Sikhs, the English and Tipu Sultan shattered its pan-Indian dreams.<sup>29</sup>

Little is known about Maratha painting. A few superb miniatures have emerged, but as they rarely relate to one another stylistically, it is difficult to recreate the chronology of the Maratha schools. It is probable that schools of miniature painting, principally portraiture, developed at the main centres of Maratha power, like Poona, Kolhapur, Satara and Nagpur,<sup>30</sup> each with its own regional style. Outside the Deccan, the maharajas of Baroda, in Gujarat, and of Indore and Gwalior, may also have patronized miniature painting, probably related to Deccani styles because of the ruling dynasties' links with Maharashtra.

One of the most moving Deccani paintings of the eighteenth century is the inscribed portrait of the Maratha general Sadashiv Rao, called the Bhao Sahib, in the collection of the Kelkar Museum, Poona (234 and col. pl. xxiii). The young Bhao Sahib, nephew of the peshwa, Baji Rao (1720-40), led the Marathas to brilliant victories over the nizams during the 1750s, the zenith of Maratha power, but was killed at the battle of Panipat in 1761.<sup>31</sup> Here he



seems as charismatic as Alexander and as detached as a Hindu god. Attendants are sensitive to his every need: one presents a document, another announces the victor's presence with a huge lacquered fan, like a great flower, while a third flourishes a fly whisk. The picture has the same spirit of hushed pride as portraits of Raja Shamsheer Sen of Mandi (1727–81), painted during the 1740s in the Punjab Hills,<sup>32</sup> at the other end of the subcontinent, which hint at some unexplained connection between the Deccan and Punjab Hill schools.

Although the gentle scene of Hindu ladies worshipping a *lingam*, in the collection of the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, may have been painted for a European patron, given the European-influenced perspective and thin gouache, like western watercolours, it is strongly related to Maratha styles (235).<sup>33</sup> The ladies wear eight-yard saris, tied between their legs like

232. (OPPOSITE, LEFT) *Lady grasping the branch of a tree*  
Hyderabad, mid eighteenth century  
16.3 × 11.1 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum,  
London, I.S. 110–1960

233. (OPPOSITE, RIGHT) *Lady stretching*  
Hyderabad, third quarter  
eighteenth century  
21.7 × 14.5 cm  
Prince of Wales Museum,  
Bombay, 22.3441

234. (RIGHT) *Sadashiv Rao, called the Bhao Sahib*  
Maratha, c. 1750–60  
Kelkar Museum, Poona  
See col. pl. xxiii on p. 247





235. *Ladies worshipping a lingam*  
 Maratha (?), second half eighteenth century  
 44.9 × 57.1 cm  
 Marquis of Dufferin and Ava Collection, London

*dhotis*, a distinctly Maharashtrian fashion. Their *kohl*-darkened eyes, chalk-white faces and flat hair styles resemble figures in Maratha devotional painting. The painting may have been produced during the second half of the eighteenth century at Poona, which had both a British resident and a French military contingent. Similarly, the double miniature illustrating the manuscript of the life of Subhan Khan, probably painted during the last quarter of the eighteenth century and now in the collection of the late Muhammad Ashraf, in Hyderabad, derives from Maratha sources (236).<sup>34</sup> The nobleman seated behind the centrally placed European, wears his turban in the long, low Maratha fashion, which became popular in North India during the nineteenth century.

The power and wealth which flowed into Maratha coffers during the eighteenth century soon corrupted the sturdy warrior-peasants, who had boasted of chopping down the withered tree of Mughal rule.<sup>35</sup> They also withered; the luxuries of the Mughal emperors and the Deccani sultans were eagerly sought after at Kolhapur, Satara and Poona: 'contemporary [Maratha] correspondence contains constant applications . . . to their friends in Hindustan to

procure . . . old Sanskrit manuscripts, pictures and carvings, other articles of luxury, and dancing girls and musicians.<sup>36</sup> Racing along the path of decadence, their political power declined swiftly. In 1818 the peshwa surrendered to the British who incorporated his lands into the Bombay Presidency and abolished his office.

For nearly a century the peshwa had ruled in the name of the nominal Maratha king; the British now continued the fiction for another thirty years. They re-instated Pratap Singh upon the throne of Satara, and, when he proved recalcitrant, banished him to Benares, replacing him with his adopted son Shahoor Maharaj Chatterpiddy. The portrait of the child-king's court, in the Binney Collection, portrays the descendants of fierce warriors as emasculated, tragically vulnerable puppets (237).<sup>37</sup> The courtiers seem gentle and confused, and the setting is as fragile as a bubble. The child had ruled only a year when the British annexed the state in 1848.

Painting at Hyderabad became, with certain exceptions, dry and repetitive from the late eighteenth century onwards. However, a few surviving sketches, as well as the finished

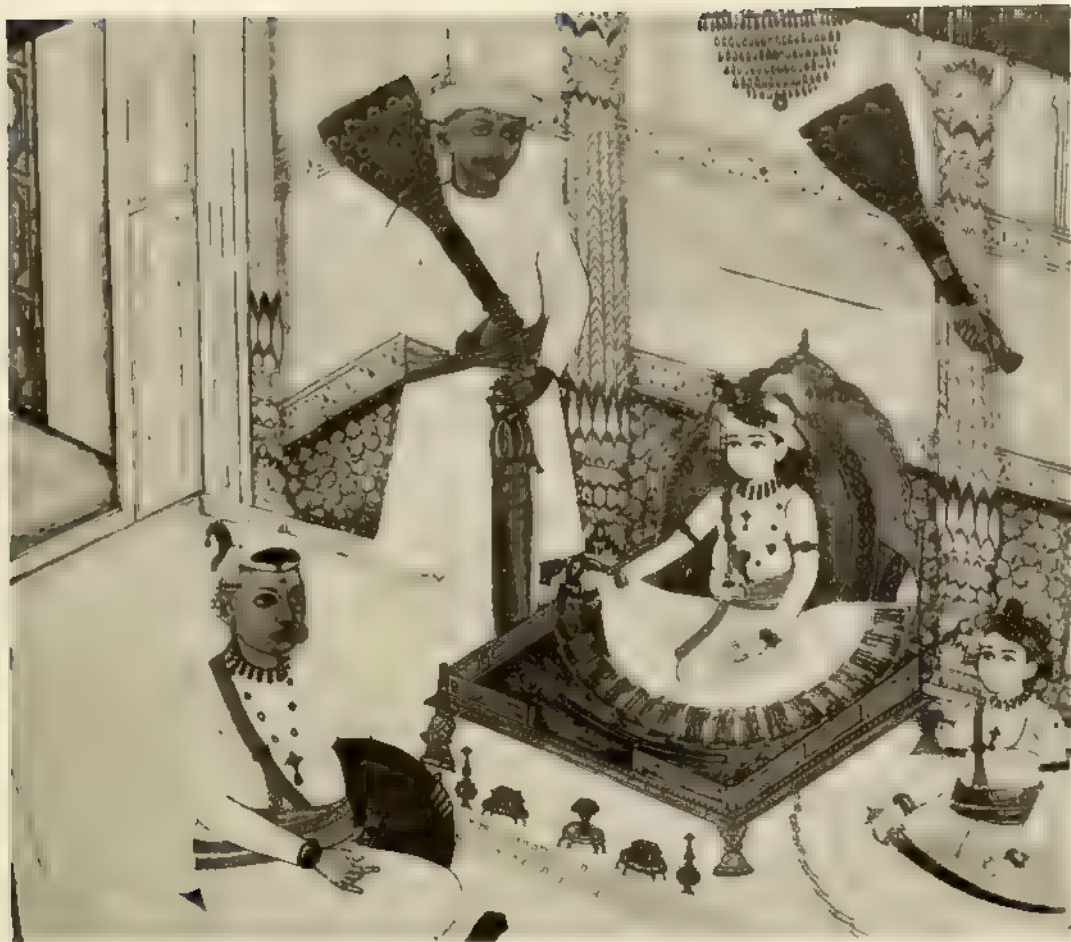


236. *Deccani noblemen meet a European*, an illustration from the manuscript of the life of Subhan Khan Maratha or Hyderabad, last quarter eighteenth century 43 x 27 cm

The late Muhammad Ashraf Collection, Hyderabad







237. (ABOVE) *Shahoor Maharaj*  
*Chutterpiddy of Satara*  
 Maratha, probably Satara, c. 1847  
 24.8 x 29.3 cm  
 Edwin Binney 3rd Collection, San Diego

238. (RIGHT) *Naivab Sikandar Jah*  
*sniffing a mango*  
 Hyderabad, c. 1775  
 10.5 x 8.5 cm  
 Latifi Collection, Bombay



paintings, show that some artists still had a fresh approach. A superb little drawing of Prince Sikandar Jah, who later became nizām (1803–29), in the Latifi Collection, Bombay, is a remarkable evocation of a moment in the child's life (238).<sup>38</sup> While he squeezes a ripe mango with one hand and sniffs at another, trying to decide which one is best, we feast our eyes upon the beauty of his jewellery, his graceful gestures and the delicate sadness of his face. As he was born in 1768 and appears to be about six or seven in the drawing, it can be dated to c. 1775.

A sketch of a maid combing her mistress's hair, in the same collection, seethes with sexuality (239).<sup>39</sup> The lady, all ample curves, appears lost in thought, perhaps remembering an absent lover. The South Indian proportions of the women's bodies – tiny waists and huge hips – suggest a provenance south of Hyderabad, perhaps at Sholapur or Kurnool, where Dravidian figural traditions were stronger than at Hyderabad. Another rapid sketch, this time lightly painted, in the Government Museum, Hyderabad, is a remarkably realistic record of a mother, or servant girl, trying to cajole a naughty little boy out of his angry mood (240).<sup>40</sup> Both sketches probably date from the last quarter of the eighteenth century.

One of the few dated documents of eighteenth-century Deccan painting is contained in the album of miniatures and calligraphy assembled for a Hyderabad nobleman, Himmāt Yar



239. *Maid combing a lady's hair*  
Hyderabad, last quarter eighteenth century  
15.7 × 7.3 cm  
Latifi Collection, Bombay



240. *Mother cajoling a naughty child*  
Hyderabad, last quarter eighteenth century  
15.7 × 7.3 cm  
State Museum, Hyderabad, 1353



Khan, now in the British Library.<sup>41</sup> On folio 2a, a *shamsa*, or decorative sunburst, encloses his seal and a date which corresponds to 1784 AD. On folio 27a, a fine Hyderabad miniature depicts a young man, probably Himmat Yar Khan himself, smoking a bidri *huqqa* and listening to lady entertainers singing. The artist captures the nobleman's mood of pleasurable concentration with brilliant immediacy (241), while the women are expressionless.

A sumptuous portrait, in a private collection, depicts the minister Saif al Mulk, son of Azim ul Umara, prime minister of Nizam Ali Khan (1762–1803), inspecting jewels brought to him on a tray by a Hindu jeweller (242). As in Pahari painting, bits of brilliantly flashing beetle wing, pasted onto the surface of the painting, represent the nawab's emerald ornaments. The dominant colours of green, gold and mauve, give the effect of a magnificent piece of jewellery, set with multicoloured stones, appropriate to the subject of the scene. The impression is of a civilization fabulously rich in material culture, but with little originality in other spheres.

On the reverse is an English inscription, dated 1807, written by Thomas Sydenham, British resident at Hyderabad during the first decade of the nineteenth century (243). He gives the nawab's name and attributes the painting to Venkatchellam, court artist of Nizam Ali Khan, adding the controversial information that the nizam had invited this artist to the Deccan from Jaipur, in Rajasthan.<sup>42</sup> As Venkatchellam's style shows no Rajasthani influence and does not differ from other Hyderabad painters except for greater expressive power, Sydenham may have been misinformed about the artist's origins.

A second portrait of Saif al Mulk, hawking on camelback, has recently come to light (244).<sup>43</sup> As its delicate style, with no attempt at characterization, is identical to that of the



241. (OPPOSITE) Nawab Himmat Yar Khan smoking a *hugqa* (detail)  
Hyderabad, dated 1784  
British Library, London,  
Or. 2787a, fol. 27a

242. (RIGHT) Nawab Saif al Mulk inspecting jewels  
Attributed here to Venkatchellam  
Hyderabad, c. 1795  
37.6 x 25.2 cm (folio)  
Private collection  
A dated (1807) inscription on the reverse by Thomas Sydenham, British resident at Hyderabad, attributes this painting to the artist Venkatchellam

243. Detail of 242  
The inscription on the reverse



Portrait of Nizam-ul-Mulk, 'the Lion of the Desert', the great conqueror of Malabar, the son of Nizam-ul-Mulk. Nizam-ul-Mulk was the founder of the Nizam's rule in Hyderabad, the founder of the Nizam's rule in Hyderabad, the founder of the Nizam's rule in Hyderabad.

This beautiful and original specimen of Nizam-ul-Mulk's portrait was taken from the collection of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, who was visited by the artist, Nizam-ul-Mulk, and was appointed Nizam-ul-Mulk's portrait painter to his court.

The portrait was painted in the style of the Nizam-ul-Mulk, and was presented with much difficulty from the artist, Nizam-ul-Mulk, to the Nizam-ul-Mulk.

Thomas Sydenham  
Resident at Hyderabad  
1807

seated portrait, it must also be the work of Venkatchellam. The Persian inscription informs us that Saif al Mulk is the son of Aristu Jah. This must have been a title for Azim ul Umara, not to be confused with Munir al Mulk, Aristu Jah, minister of the succeeding nizam, Sikandar Jah (1803 -29) <sup>44</sup> The seal of ownership is Aristu Jah's, dated 1212 AH/1797 -98 AD. As Saif al Mulk appears to be the same age in both portraits, they were probably executed at approximately the same time, c. 1795.

A large painting of a Hyderabad prince riding a gaudily painted elephant accompanied by his army, in the Victoria and Albert Museum may also be the work of Venkatchellam



244. (LEFT) *Nawab Saif al Mulk*  
*hawking on camelback*  
Attributed here to Venkatchellam  
Hyderabad, c. 1795  
39 x 27 cm  
Private collection

245. (OPPOSITE) *Nawab*  
*Jitsam al Mulk Bahadur*  
Attributed here to Venkatchellam  
Hyderabad, c. 1795  
30.7 x 40.5 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum,  
London, I.M. 258-1921





(245).<sup>45</sup> His usual delicate puppetry in the handling of figures, lacking any individual character, is partially compensated by a brilliant palette of blues, greens and orange. The grouping of the army in parallel registers recalls similar conventions in Ottoman Turkish miniatures,<sup>46</sup> which the nizams could have acquired as a result of their matrimonial alliances with Istanbul.

The Persian inscription identifies the prince as Nawab Ihtisam al Mulk Bahadur, Mir Abbas Ali Khan, Arzabih (?) Padishahi. Except for the name Ali Khan, who was nizam from 1762 until 1803, the other names and titles are unfamiliar. As his dress, turban style and distinctive jewellery suggest that he is either the nizam or a very close relative, the miniature may be of Ali Khan as a young man, when he used titles by which he is no longer known.

Large-scale paintings, rare in Indian art, continued to enjoy popularity in the Deccan throughout the eighteenth century. Venkatchellam painted several surviving examples for his patron Nizam Ali Khan.<sup>42</sup> One, in the Ashraf Collection, Hyderabad, signed by the artist





246 (LEFT) *Nizam Ali Khan, Asaf Jah II*  
Signed by Venkatchellam  
Hyderabad, dated 1206 AH/1791–92 AD  
130 × 66.5 cm  
The late Muhammad Ashraf Collection,  
Hyderabad

247. (OPPOSITE) *Munir al Mulk,*  
*called Aristu Jah*  
Attributed here to Venkatchellam  
Hyderabad, c. 1810  
32.7 × 25.4 cm  
Victoria and Albert Museum, London,  
i.s. 163–1952  
See col. pl. xxiv on p. 248

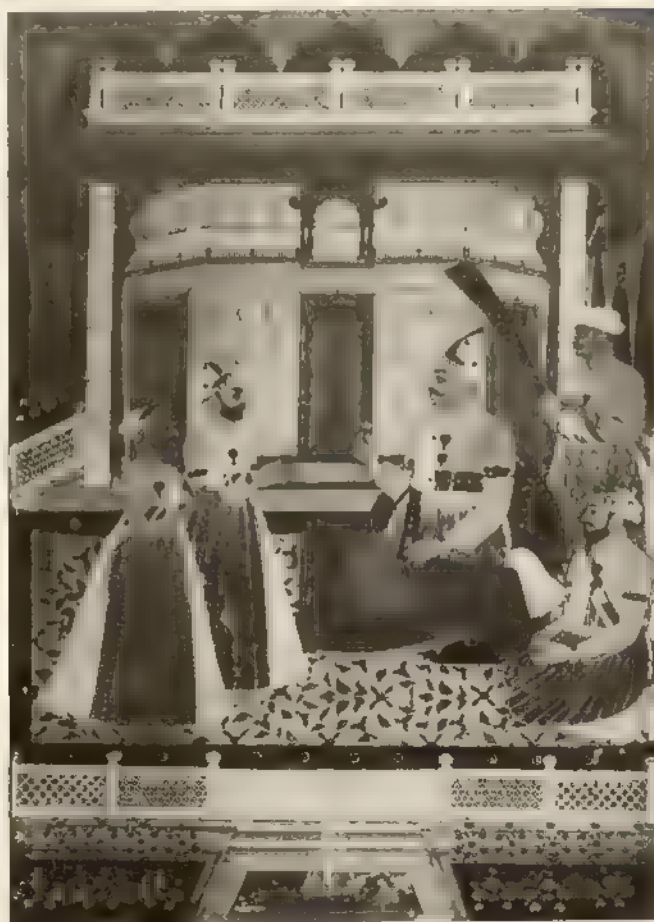
and dated 1206 AH/1791–92 AD depicts the nizām as the source of grace and good breeding – for which the prestigious but impotent kingdom of Hyderabad was celebrated – rather than as a symbol of power (246).<sup>47</sup>

Real energy and emotion radiate from only one Hyderabad painting of this period, more akin in spirit to the great sixteenth-century portraits of the sultan of Ahmadnagar (4–5 and col. pl. II) than contemporary Deccani work. It is the magnificent portrait, in the Victoria and Albert Museum, of Munir al Mulk, called Aristu Jah, who became the divan, or prime minister, of Nizam Sikandar Jah in 1809 (247 and col. pl. xxiv).<sup>48</sup> Although little is known of his character, the picture reveals a man far greater than his age. Proud, elegant and reserved, he is splendidly isolated from his attendants upon a plain green ground, crowned by a glorious ridge of orange clouds, the bold swagger of his *huqqa* tube suggesting inner audacity.





248 *Munir al Mulk, called Arisu Jah*  
Hyderabad, c. 1810  
30.3 × 20.9 cm  
Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, 22 3584



249. *Group portrait of Raja Chandulal (left) and Munir al Mulk (centre) paying respects to Nizam Sikandar Jah*  
Hyderabad, c. 1809–29 30.3 × 20.9 cm  
The late Muhammad Ashraf Collection, Hyderabad

The attendants' doll-like faces and piercing eyes, the flashing bits of green beetle wing representing jewellery and the full, stiff skirts are characteristic of Venkatchellam, who here surpasses all his other surviving works. For once he proves himself a great artist, avoiding fussiness and garish colour. His line is simple and evocative; his colours harmonious, his mood lyrical. As Munir al Mulk did not gain prominence at court until 1809,<sup>49</sup> this painting can be dated to about 1810, when the artist's talents were mature.

The depiction of Munir al Mulk, in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, is stereotyped by comparison, though impressively large in scale (248).<sup>50</sup> The group portrait of Nizam Sikandar Jah (1803–29) in the Ashraf Collection, Hyderabad, is equally spiritless (249). The nizam sits on the right of the terrace, impassively smelling a rose, while his two chief ministers stand before him, Raja Chandulal on the left and Munir al Mulk on the right, his hands folded in respect, as in the Bombay portrait. The date must be between 1809, the year the two ministers received their appointments, and 1829, when the nizam died.



Sikandar Jah acceded to the throne just after the Subsidiary Alliance of 1800 had made Hyderabad a British dependency. The British had succeeded in making his first divan, Shams ul Umara, a tool of their interests. Upon his death (1808), they attempted to develop their links with the office of divan into a means for controlling the kingdom, insisting that the nizam appoint the pro-British Chandulal. The nizam refused and appointed Mumir al Mulk, Aristu Jah, instead – just to spite the British, for he strongly disliked the man. He gave Chandulal the lesser office of peshkar, but through British support, Chandulal rapidly became all-powerful, embittering both the nizam and Aristu Jah. The nizam resented his helplessness, became melancholy and lost interest in governing. The British resident, Sir Henry Russell, voiced the official colonial view of the nizam, when he commented: 'His original defects of character, the habits of his life, his dislike of his own ministers and his jealousy of our control have gradually withdrawn him into a sullen and total seclusion'<sup>51</sup>

The group portrait (249) gives no indication of the bitter rivalry between the two ministers, nor of their stormy relationship with the nizam. Art lost its spirit during Sikandar Jah's reign, just as the last relics of political independence were snatched away. The aristocracy continued to commission paintings throughout the first half of the nineteenth century. Although subject matter hardly changes at all – alluring courtesans continue to enjoy the traditional refinements of life (250)<sup>52</sup> and versions of earlier Deccani paintings were commissioned (251)<sup>53</sup> – a deadly hardness has set in.



250. *Lady smoking a huqqa*  
Hyderabad, first half nineteenth century  
20.5 × 13 cm  
Private collection



251. *Mujahid Jang and Mirassa Bai sitting in a garden*  
Hyderabad, first half nineteenth century, after an  
early eighteenth-century Deccani original (208)  
Bharat Kala Bhavan, Benares



252. *Nawab Ghulam Ahmad Khan of Kurnool visiting the saint Piran Sahib*  
Kurnool, c. 1815–23  
33.3 × 22.2 cm  
National Museum of India,  
New Delhi, 60. 1120

Painting at the provincial courts south of Hyderabad retained an earthy vigour long after stereotypes had become the rule at the capital. Muslim officers in Aurangzeb's service, Pathan (Afghan) in origin, established themselves as nawabs at Kurnool, Cuddipah and Savanur during the early eighteenth century; later they became tributary to the nizam, when he won independence from Delhi. Hindu rajas, also tributaries of the Hyderabad court, mainly from the Telugu-speaking Reddy caste, ruled at Gadwal, Shorapur and Wanparthy. Another important feudatory nobleman was the nawab of Banganapalle, near Kurnool. Paintings from Kurnool, Gadwal, Shorapur and Wanparthy have so far emerged, though the rulers at other centres may also have been artistic patrons.<sup>54</sup>

Kurnool, situated on the banks of the Tungabhadra River, about one hundred and seventy five kilometres south of Hyderabad, was the largest subordinate state and seems to have had the most important school of painting outside the capital. Portraits predominate, and we often see the nawabs, or their near relatives, smoking *huqqas*, listening to singers and, most frequently of all, visiting saints, which suggests that the region was an important centre of Islamic piety.



253. *Nawab Ghulam Ahmad Khan*

*of Kurnool visiting the saint*

*Burhan ud din Sahib*

Kurnool, c. 1815–23

33 × 23 cm

National Museum of India, New Delhi

In a miniature in the National Museum, New Delhi, Ghulam Ahmad Khan, brother of the ruling nawab, Munawwar Khan (1815–23), respectfully stands during an interview with the saint, Piran Sahib and his son Ibrahim (252). Warm colours (green, blue and yellow) and whimsically curving lines create an innocent charm that contemporary Hyderabad painting lacks. The young nawab wears the distinctive long, low turban of the area, and the arabesque of the carpet is identical to the decoration on Kurnool lacquerware, which constituted an important local industry.

In a second portrait in the same collection, Ghulam Ahmad visits another saint, Burhan ud din Sahib, whose purity of character is conveyed by the stark whiteness of his cell, like the small white-washed mosques which dot the Deccani countryside (253). Despite their simple elegance, these paintings fail to maintain the brilliant promise of earlier Kurnool work, like the Paris and Zürich *darbar* scenes (211, 214).

The rajas of Gadwal, fifty kilometres north of Kurnool, were also keen patrons of the arts. The Gadwal school of painting achieved a local flavour, particularly during the reign of Raja Soma Bhopal Rao (1840–44). The slender figures and delicate Islamic patterns of the





Hyderabad school are discarded. Massive physiques, like ancient Indian icons of fertility spirits, and plain expanses of brilliant colour re-emerge from an underlying sensibility, seemingly untouched by centuries of Islamic influence. In the portrait of Raja Soma Bhopal Rao practicing archery with his court, in the State Museum, Hyderabad, the strong, simple lines of the architecture immediately suggest the raja's energy (254).<sup>55</sup>

Another portrait of the same prince, in a private collection, possibly by the same artist, is a sober evocation of power (255).<sup>56</sup> The raja, his skin a mellow coffee colour, wears a dark red turban and sits on a heap of white pillows. The subtleties of the Islamic arabesque have been replaced by bold patterns of indigenous taste. Surprisingly, at the court of the raja of Wanparthy, a mere fifteen kilometres from Gadwal, this passion for portraiture found no response. The only evidence of painting there is a dispersed *ragamala* set of folk intensity, formerly in the raja's collection, probably executed during the mid eighteenth century.<sup>57</sup>

At Shorapur, as well, on the south-western border of the Hyderabad state near Byapur, the rajas preferred paintings of religious themes to portraiture. The fact that the town was an important centre of Sanskrit scholarship proved decisive for the subject matter of its art. Ateliers of miniature painters, especially after the mid eighteenth century, must have been extensive, for they provided devotional painting for aristocratic Hindu families all over the southern Deccan, including Hyderabad city. Some Shorapur painters practiced their distinctive idiom at Hyderabad itself, confusing the issue of provenance. In 1858, the last raja, Venkatappa Naik, led an unsuccessful rebellion against the British during the Indian Mutiny.

The royal line was extinguished in that year and the principality was dissolved. Many painters were forced to seek patronage at Hyderabad, where they continued working for wealthy families and Hindu temples.

Figures in Shorapur paintings derive from Hyderabad types but are usually shorter, often standing in rigid South Indian poses, like temple sculpture of the Nayak period. The Islamic costumes in Hyderabad painting are not depicted at Shorapur. Instead, women wear the eight-yard *sari*, tied Maratha style between the legs, and men wear the *dhoti*. Some paintings, like the late eighteenth-century *Marriage of Vishnu and Lakshmi*, in the Bharata Itahasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona, have sensitive depictions of plants and animals which

254. (OPPOSITE) *Raja Soma Bhopal Rao II practicing archery with his courtiers*  
Gadwal, c. 1840–44  
State Museum, Hyderabad

255. (RIGHT) *Raja Soma Bhopal Rao II*  
Gadwal, c. 1840–44  
17.5 × 10 cm  
J. Soustiel, Paris

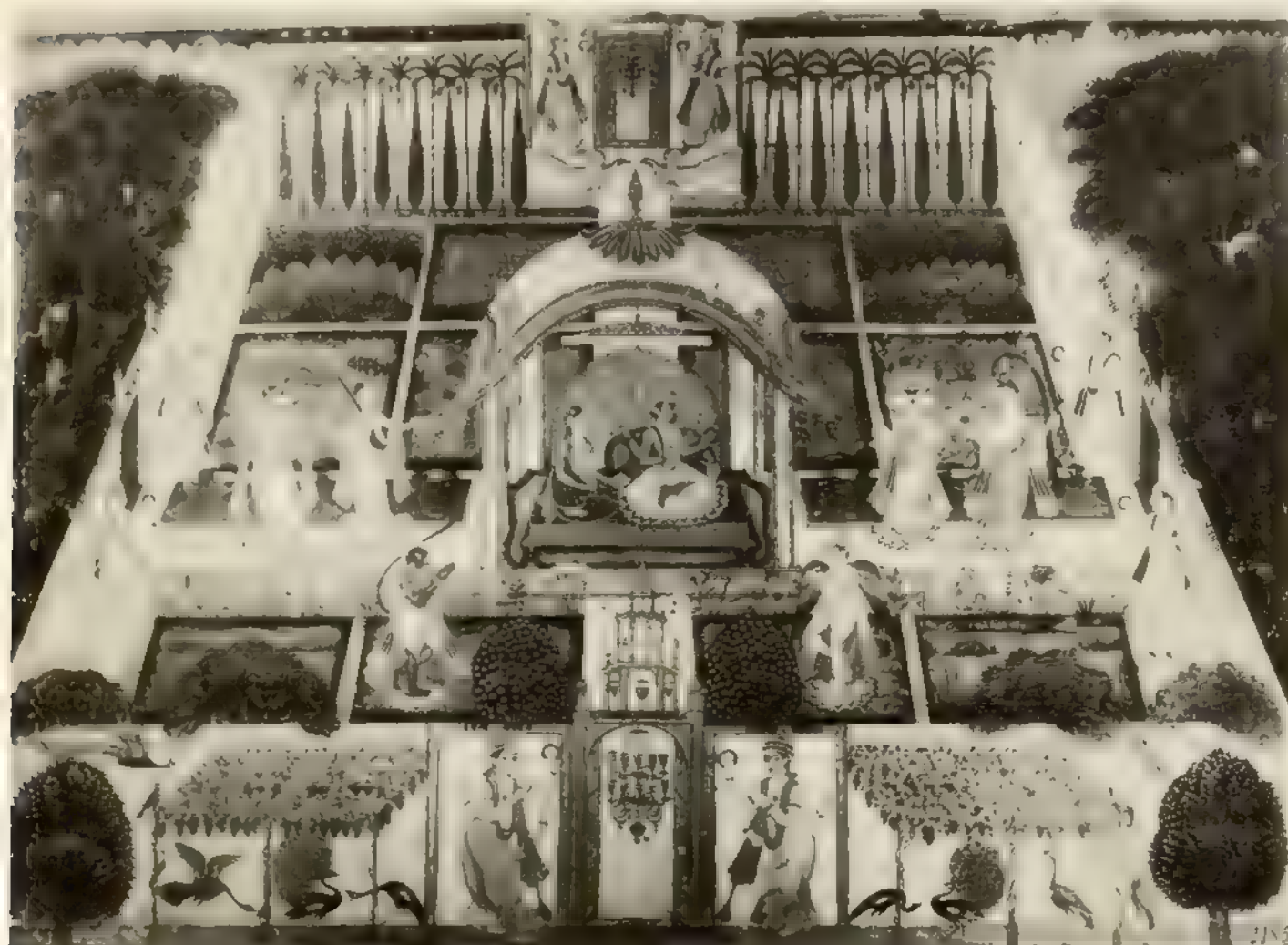


## DECCANI PAINTING

compensate for the brittleness of the main figures (256).<sup>58</sup> Later on, brushwork becomes coarse and often has a 'feathery' feel, as in the early nineteenth-century miniature of Krishna and the *gopis* in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay (257).<sup>59</sup> Gilded gesso work, built up in relief and incised with repeating patterns is frequent, often producing a garish effect. Some late Hyderabad paintings, like the *Lady smoking a huqqa* (250), are sometimes attributed to Shorapur, but the Islamic costume and profane subject matter exclude such an attribution.

Many portraits of provincial grandees cannot be attributed to any centre. They often have expressive eccentricities which elevate them above the hackneyed productions of the Hyderabad school. Patrons were probably keen that their artists touch upon local peculiarities of rank, wealth and personality, a demand that some artists responded to creatively and humorously. In the portrait of Satji Prithvi Das, in the State Museum, Hyderabad (258), the ruler proudly listens to a girl playing a *veena* while a hilarious procession of his military might marches by, smaller than the poppies in his garden, complete with elephants, cannon, cavalry, infantry in French uniforms and a camel!

Nineteenth-century portraits of two rajas, in the State Museum, Hyderabad (259-62),







256. (OPPOSITE) *Marriage of Vishnu and Lakshmi*  
Shorapur, late eighteenth century  
Bharata Itihāsa Samshodhaka Mandala,  
Poona, 1185

257. (ABOVE) *Krishna and the gopis*  
Shorapur, early nineteenth century  
18 × 39 cm  
Prince of Wales Museum,  
Bombay, 43.43

258. (RIGHT) *Raja Saty Prithvi Das*  
Provincial Deccan centre,  
early nineteenth century  
28.2 × 18.4 cm  
State Museum, Hyderabad, 2003





259. (LEFT) *Raja Marchand*  
Provincial Deccani centre,  
early nineteenth century  
State Museum, Hyderabad,  
P. 201.1

260. (BELOW) Detail of 259



show just how brilliant these local painters could be. They worked rapidly, using cheap pigments, liberally mixed with water, and low quality paper. Compositions were conventional, figures invariably sit on open terraces in the centre of the page with a formal flower garden in the foreground and fruit trees beyond a wall in the background. Despite reliance on visual formulae, the painter enjoyed a freedom to develop his own concept of the raja's personality that would have been unthinkable at Hyderabad. In the portrait of Raja Marchand, identified by a Telugu inscription on the reverse, we see a dreamy young man, lost in thought (260), while the other raja, looking older than his years, seems a cutting cynic

261. (RIGHT) *An unidentified raja*  
Provincial Deccani centre,  
early nineteenth century  
State Museum, Hyderabad, p. 6285

262. (BELOW) Detail of 261



(262) As the two men wear completely dissimilar turbans, they must be from different regions, suggesting that their talented portrait painter was itinerant.

Painting continued at Hyderabad throughout the nineteenth century, increasingly reliant upon hackneyed conventions. Devotional subjects, by their very nature, changed less than portraiture, which was threatened by the aristocracy's interest in the realism of western art and, after mid century, by photography. European perspective and modelling were adapted to a certain extent, though less so than in North India. Hyderabad remained an unchanging bastion of traditional Muslim society in the middle of the subcontinent, highly conscious of





263. *Nawab Sipahdar ud daula, son of  
Nasir al Mulk Bahadur, hawking*  
Hyderabad, second half nineteenth century  
90 x 60 cm  
Private collection

its unique position after the extinction of Islamic rule at Lucknow and Delhi (1858). Ancient links with the Middle East were maintained, Muslim writers and theologians easily found patronage and the political status quo was protected by the British, keen to maintain peace and prosperity.

An unusually large painting in a private collection, probably dating from the second half of the nineteenth century, depicts, according to the Persian inscription, Nawab Sipahdar ud daula, son of Nasir al Mulk Bahadur (263). It shows that some Indian artists could creatively adapt foreign elements of expression to local demands even at this late date, just as Indian artists had always done, at least as early as the Mauryan period (third century BC) and probably earlier. One's reaction to it is: 'How English!' This initial impression, however, can only be momentary and superficial, resulting from the modelling and the suggestion of

depth. The trees, rocks and distant cityscape do not substantially differ from ancient Indian conventions, as in the stone reliefs at Sanchi and Bharhut. Even the figures, despite a new realism, are not portraits of individuals, but incisive evocations of types.

The nawab races through the rocky Deccani countryside hawking, accompanied by his elephant and a retinue of Indian, African and Arab attendants, very much in the tradition of earlier Deccani hunt scenes (183, 185, 206, 244 and col. pl. xxi). Iridescent costumes and emerald-green trees are flashes of brilliant colour against a dust-grey background. The artist is a master at suggesting both the movement of the figures and the ponderous stability of the landscape. Despite the decline of painting throughout India during the nineteenth century, such masterpieces prove that creative talent still existed. It still exists today, if only patrons could be found to bring it forth.

## NOTES

1. Sarkar (1963), pp. 377ff.
2. Ibid., p. 378.
3. Worswick.
4. The most outstanding were perhaps Mirza Muhammad Sauda, Muhammad Taqi Mir and Khwaja Mir Dard. See Ahmed Ali (1973) and Schimmel (1973). Although eighteenth-century writers, as well as the nineteenth-century poet Ghalib, still composed partly in Persian, there was a new preference for Urdu.
5. P. G. 5d. 3. Gangoly, pl. viiiB.
6. Mittal (1963), p. 46.
7. Ibid., p. 47.
8. 22. 3409. Previously unpublished.
9. Mehta, pls 12-13.
10. Ebeling, pp. 199-200.
11. *Mages Bulletin* no. 8, pls xii - xix.
12. 22. 3482. Previously unpublished.
13. Falk and Archer, no. 422.
14. Christie's, London, 12 October 1978, lot 20, pl. 44.
15. Lee and Archer, no. 10.
16. Khandalavala and Chandra (1965), no. 68. The earliest version of this picture which we have seen is a portrait of Sultan Ali Adil Shah II (1656-72) relaxing in a garden (117 and col. pl. xvi).
17. Sotheby's, London, 24 April 1978, lot 64.
18. Sotheby's, London, 7 April 1975, lot 160. Other pages from this set were sold at Sotheby's, London, on 12 April 1976 and 2 May 1977.
19. Private collection. Unfortunately, the painting cannot be published at present. Seven other paintings, part of a dispersed *ragamala* set, in the Kumar Collection, Paris, are charming, simpler versions of this workshop's style (see Ebeling, p. 199, no. 79). Also related are *ragamala* paintings in the Museum for Indian Art, West Berlin, and an undated Urdu manuscript on erotics which was recently on the London art market. Christie's, 12 October 1978, lot 199.
20. Falk and Archer, no. 426 (i xxxvi).
21. Part of his collection is now in the Islamisches Museum, Berlin (GDR). See also ch. 4, n. 31.
22. Falk and Archer, pp. 16-17.
23. i.s. 157. 1952. Previously unpublished.
24. Mittal (1963), pp. 22-23.
25. Binney (1973), no. 162. Pages from related *ragamalas* are in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay (Ebeling, p. 194, no. 70), the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad (Ibid., p. 195, no. 71); the British Museum (Stchoukine (1929b), pl. lxxxv); and the Rietberg Museum, Zurich.
26. i.s. 110. 1960. Previously unpublished.
27. Topsfield, no. 40. A third version is in the Prince of Wales Museum, Bombay, 53.76.
28. 22. 3441.
29. Rawlinson.
30. A large painting of Maharaja Raghuji Bhonsle II (1788-1816) of Nagpur, receiving a petition from an assembled army, is in the collection of Edwin Binney 3rd, San Diego. A careful sifting through the collections of the Kelkar Museum, Poona, the Bharata Itihasa Samshodhaka Mandala, Poona, the Marathwada University, Aurangabad, and the museums at Aundh and Satara would probably yield important examples of Maratha painting.
31. Rawlinson, p. 424.
32. Archer, W. G. (1973), vol. II, Mandi, figs 23-25.
33. Welch (1978a), no. 68a.
34. Gray (1950), no. 873 (not reproduced).
35. Rawlinson, p. 397.
36. Ibid., p. 413.
37. Welch (1978a), no. 70.

38. Gray (1950), pl. 149. A finished painting depicting Sikandar at about the same age lacks this drawing's sensitivity, but as it is inscribed with the prince's name it provides identification of its subject. Christie's, London, 24 April 1980, lot 63.
39. Gray (1950), pl. 149.
40. Gray (1950), pl. 149.
41. Or. 2787a.
42. According to Mittal (1963), pp. 44–45, Venkat-chellam was Nizam Ali Khan's favourite painter, received a princely annual *jagir* of 12,000 rupees and is responsible for two large cloth paintings depicting processions of the nizam, in the Salar Jang Museum, Hyderabad. A third large procession scene by this artist is in a private collection, London.
43. Sotheby's, London, 22 April 1980, lot 43.
44. For the reigns of Nizam Ali Khan (1762–1803) and Sikandar Jah (1803–29) and their ministers Azim ul Umara and Munir al Mulk, see Regani, chs 4–6.
45. I.M. 258–1921.
46. See Esn, pl. 9.
47. Gray (1950), pl. 150.
48. I.S. 163–1952. Previously unpublished. The minister's name Aristu (the Islamic name for Aristotle) was appropriate, for he advised Nizam Sikandar (Alexander).
49. See Regani, pp. 210–11.
50. 22. 3584. Previously unpublished.
51. Regani, pp. 212–13.
52. Christie's, London, 12 October 1978, lot 210.
53. Bharat Kala Bhavan. It is a copy after the early eighteenth-century portrait of Mujahid Jang and Murassa Bai by the Jaipur painter (208).
54. *Marg March* 1963, vol. xvi, no. 2, pp. 57–64. Paintings from provincial Deccani centres are in the reserve collections of the Mittal Museum, the State Museum, and the Salar Jang Museum, all in Hyderabad. Arcot, not in the Deccan proper, near the European coastal settlements of Madras and Pondicherry, was also a centre of painting. A few portraits of the nawabs of Arcot are known: *ibid.*, p. 64.
55. This portrait and the following one, are inscribed with the raja's name in Telugu.
56. Mittal (1963), p. 59.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 58; Binney (1973), no. 175.
58. 1185. Previously unpublished.
59. Mittal (1963), p. 52.



# Appendix:

## *Rulers of the Deccan*

### *Nizam Shahi sultans of Ahmadnagar*

1490-1510	Ahmad Nizam Shah Bahri I
1510-1554	Burhan Nizam Shah I
1554-1565	Husain Nizam Shah I
1565-1588	Murtaza Nizam Shah I
1588-1589	Husain Nizam Shah II
1589-1591	Ismail Nizam Shah
1591-1595	Burhan Nizam Shah II
1595	Ibrahim Nizam Shah
1595	Ahmad Nizam Shah II
1595-1600	Bahadur Nizam Shah
1600-1610	Murtaza Nizam Shah II
1610-1632	Burhan Nizam Shah III
1632	Husain Nizam Shah III
1632-1636	Murtaza Nizam Shah III

### *Adil Shahi sultans of Bijapur*

1489-1509	Yusuf Adil Shah
1509-1534	Ismail Adil Shah
1534	Mallu Adil Shah
1534-1557	Ibrahim Adil Shah I
1557-1579	Ali Adil Shah I
1579-1627	Ibrahim Adil Shah II
1627-1656	Muhammad Adil Shah
1656-1672	Ali Adil Shah II
1672-1686	Sikandar Adil Shah

### *Qutb Shahi sultans of Golconda*

1512-1543	Sultan Quli Qutb Shah
1543-1550	Jamshid Quli Qutb Shah
1550	Subhan Quli Qutb Shah
1550-1580	Ibrahim Qutb Shah
1580-1612	Muhammad Quli Qutb Shah
1612-1626	Muhammad Qutb Shah

1626-1672	Abdullah Qutb Shah
1672-1687	Abul Hasan Qutb Shah ('Tana Shah')

### *Asafiya dynasty of Hyderabad (nizams of Hyderabad)*

1724-1748	Nawab Mir Qamar ud din, Nizam al Mulk, Asaf Jah I
1748-1750	Nawab Mir Ahmad Khan, Nasir Jang
1750-1751	Nawab Muzaffar Jang
1751-1762	Nawab Salabat Jang
1762-1803	Nawab Mir Nizam Ali Khan, Asaf Jah II
1803-1829	Nawab Sikandar Jah, Asaf Jah III
1829-1857	Nawab Ali Khan, Nasir ud daula, Asaf Jah IV
1857-1869	Nawab Ali Khan, Afzal ud daula, Asaf Jah V
1869-1911	Nawab Mir Mahbub Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VI
1911-1950	Nawab Mir Osman Ali Khan, Asaf Jah VII

### *Pathan nawabs of Kurnool*

-1674	Khizr Khan
1674-1712	Dawud Khan
1712-1718	Ali Khan
1718-1731	Ibrahim Khan
1731-1744	Alif Khan
1744-1751	Himayat Khan
1751-1792	Munawwar Khan I
1792-1815	Alif Khan II
1815-1823	Munawwar Khan II
1823-1839	Ghulam Rasul Khan

*Hindu Samasthans (tributary to the nizams of Hyderabad)*

	WANPARTHY
1512-1540	Veera Krishna Reddy
1540-1566	Venkat Reddy
1566-1592	Rama Krishna Reddy
1592-1625	Pedda Venkat Reddy
1625-1648	Immidi Venkat Reddy
1648-1676	Gopal Rao
1676-1691	Bahiri Gopal Rao
1691-1719	Venkat Reddy
1719-1746	Bahiri Gopal Rao
1746-1763	Sawai Venkat Reddy
1763-	Bahiri Gopal Rao
-1781	Rani Janamma
1781-1807	B. Janamma
1807-1822	Ramkrishna Rao
1822-1866	Rameshwar Rao
1866-1880	Raja Ramkrishna Rao
1880-1922	Raja Rameshwar Rao II
	GADWAL
	Pedda Veera Reddy
	Peddanna Bhupaladu
	Sarga Reddy
	Veera Reddy
	Kumara Veera Reddy
	Lingamma
1711-1715	Ramanayya
1715-1719	Somanna

1727-1740	Ammakka and Lingamma
1740-1742	Thirumal Rao
1742-1747	Mangamma and Chokkamma
1747-1761	Pedda Rama Rao
1761-1794	Soma Bhopal Rao I
1794-1807	Raja Rama Bhopal Rao I
1807-1840	Raja Sitarama Bhopal Rao
1840	Venkatlakshamma
1840-1844	Soma Bhopal Rao II
1844-1845	Venkatlakshamma
1845-1901	Raja Rama Bhopal Rao II
1901-1924	Raja Sitarama Bhopal Rao II

SHORAPUR

-1523	Kallappa Naik
1523-1538	Chikk Hanma Naik
1538(?) -	
1622(?)	Jamp Naik
1622-1656	Gaddad Pam Naik
1656-1674	Gaddad Pid Naik
1674-1695	Pam Naik
1695-1726	Pitambar Bahari Pid Naik
1726-1741	Pam Naik
1741-1746	Pid Naik Pitambar Bahari
1746-1752	Mundgai Venkatappa Naik
1752-1774	Pam Naik
1774-1801	Venkatappa Naik
1801-1802	Kantamma
1802-1816	Pid Naik
1816-1828	Bankatappa Naik
1829-1843	Kistappa Naik
1843-1858	Venkatappa Naik

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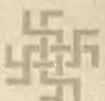


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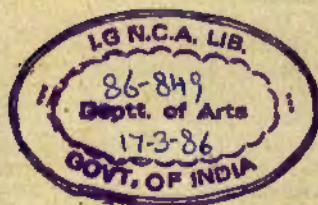
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